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OR,

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THE

NIGHT SIDE OF LONDON.

THE NIGHT SIDE OF LONDON.

BY
J. EWING RITCHIE,
AUTHOR OF "BRITISH SENATORS," ETC.

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Or seen with least reproach.

* * *

I do confess them nurseries of the arts.

* * *

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By riot and incontinence the worst."

COWPER.

New Edition,
REVISED AND ENLARGED.

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ZOBA. 43



LONDON:

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THIS BOOK

IS

Dedicated

TO

MY EVER GENEROUS FRIEND,

EDWIN FOX, Esq.

P R E F A C E.

THE subjects discussed in this volume have of late much occupied public attention. While we have been sending out missionaries to Borrioboola-gha, the intelligent natives of that Arcadian locality have respectfully, but naturally, requested us to look at home. We are doing so, and the result has already been beneficial. As regards externals, the streets of London are better than they were. In this improvement the author may claim to have had a share. He was the first to call attention to this subject as a whole ; and that he did not do so in vain, a sale of six thousand copies may be accepted as a proof.

This revised edition—the greater part of which has been re-written—it is to be hoped may be found equally serviceable and equally worthy of public favour.

IVY COTTAGE, BALLARD'S LANE, FINCHLEY,

March 25, 1869.

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THE
NIGHT SIDE OF LONDON.

CHAPTER I.

CONCERNING LONDON.

ONE of the first things we are told Sir Walter Raleigh did when he was liberated from the Tower, was to take a promenade around London, to see what wonderful improvements had been effected during his incarceration. For this purpose his biographer calculates two or three hours would have sufficed. Times have altered since then. The man who now makes the tour round London would find he had no easy task. It is hard to say where London begins or ends.

Almost equally difficult is his task who from the interior wishes to obtain a clear idea of its manifold life. It is said of a stranger who came to London for the first time, and took up his quarters

in one of its most crowded streets, that he remained standing at the door the whole of the first day of his London existence, because he waited until the crowd had gone. A man, wrote Max Schlesinger, who would do that, ought to rise and go to bed with the owl. The owl is the symbol of wisdom ; for once I would prevail upon the reader to do as the owls do, and become as wise as they. You may live at Clapham all your life, hear Bow bells strike from ten to four during business hours, come into the City every day, read your paper, talk with your little set, attend a gospel ministry, as the slang phrase is—for it is not only wicked people who talk slang—and yet know no more of London than you do of Timbuctoo.

Before going further, let us hear the great man of the last century. Talking of London, Dr. Johnson observed, “ Sir, if you wish to have a just notion of the magnitude of this city, you must not be satisfied with seeing its great streets and squares, but must survey the innumerable little lanes and courts. It is not in the showy construction of buildings, but in the multiplicity of human habitations which are crowded together, that the wonder-

ful immensity of London consists.” “I have often,” adds Boswell, “amused myself with thinking how different a place London is to different people. They whose narrow minds are contracted to the consideration of some one particular pursuit, view it only through that medium. A politician thinks of it merely as the seat of government in its different departments; a grazier as a vast market for cattle; a mercantile man as a place where a prodigious deal of business is done upon ’Change; a dramatic enthusiast as the grand scene of theatrical entertainments; a man of pleasure as an assemblage of taverns and the great emporium for ladies of easy virtue. But the intellectual man is struck with it as comprehending the whole of human life in all its variety, the contemplation of which is inexhaustible.”

It is scarce necessary to observe, London has a history. According to Mr. Isaac Taylor, “the name of London is now in all probability pronounced exactly as it was when Cæsar landed on the coast of Kent.” In Celtic times some say there was a hill fortress there, “formed by Tower-hill, Cornhill and Ludgate-hill, effectually protected

by the Thames on the south, the Fleet on the west, the great fen of Finsbury and Moorfields on the north, and by the Houndsditch on the east." In the time of the Romans it was, to use the language of Tacitus, a city "abounding in business and trade." It is calculated that it was walled in about the end of the third or beginning of the fourth century. The London of that time is from fifteen to seventeen feet below the surface. In Saxon times London was the chief city of the kingdom of Essex. It was under the Normans that it became the capital of England. As commerce increased, London grew greater and more populous, in spite of stringent proclamations against building and subletting issued by Elizabeth, James I. and Charles I. At this time London within the walls extended over 370 acres, London without the walls over 330; by the Local Management Act of 1856 the entire district was made to consist of no less than 126 square miles. At the census of 1861 it contained a population of 2,803,034. At this time the population within the registration limits is estimated at 3,126,635; but beyond this central mass, writes the Registrar-General, there is a ring of life growing rapidly

and extending along railway lines over a circle of fifteen miles from Charing Cross, and the population within that circle patrolled by the Metropolitan Police is about 3,463,777. During the last decennium London has increased at the rate of 19 per cent. In the City there are 112,063 resident inhabitants. The Metropolitan Police extend over the whole county of Middlesex and the surrounding parishes in Surrey, Kent, Essex, and Hertford, of which any part is within twelve miles of Charing Cross, a district altogether comprising 687 square miles. Annually 4029 new houses are being built. London contains 400,778 houses, each inhabited by about eight persons.

The majority of its inhabitants are indigenous; 1,741,177 were born within its limits; but of the 1,062,812 born elsewhere, 852,994 were born in extra-metropolitan counties, and parts of counties of England and Wales; 62 in 100 born in London, 19 in the counties of the three divisions immediately around London, 7 in the north-western and midland districts; 4 in the north midland and all the northern counties. In 100 inhabitants little more than $1\frac{1}{4}$ were natives of Scotland, 3·8 were natives of Ireland, 5 were from the British colonies, $1\frac{7}{16}$

from foreign parts. We get from the census the following returns :—

785,716 males of all ages.

876,650 females.

495,024 wives.

481,386 husbands.

40,679 widowers.

130,334 widows.

They are thus classified—

88,770	males,	19,068	females—	professional.
1,497,973	„	1,184,795	„	domestic.
163,908	„	6,939	„	commercial.
25,267	„	2,672	„	agricultural.
458,707	„	231,885	„	industrial.
62,368	„	31,847	„	indefinite
and non-productive, &c.				

It appears that there are in London 71,000 bricklayers, 85,000 masons, 18,000 plasterers, 177,000 carpenters and joiners, 310,000 labourers in connexion with the building trades alone : 1 in every 890 of the population is insane, 1 in 1063 blind, 1 in 1542 deaf and dumb.

London is one of the healthiest cities in the world. In 1867, 70,588 deaths were registered; nearly 10,000 persons less died that year than in 1866; the rate of mortality was 2·298 per cent. In 1863 the births were 162,119. From the age of 45 to 55 the mortality of men in London is double that in healthy country districts. On an average half of the deaths that happen in London between the age of twenty and forty are from consumption and diseases of the respiratory organs. The Registrar, as the chief cause of this, assigns the state of the streets. "There can be no doubt," he wrote a few years since, "that the dirt and dust suspended in the air the people of London breathe often excites diseases of the respiratory organs. The dirt of the streets is produced and ground fine by innumerable horses, omnibuses, and carriages, and then beat up in fine dust which fills the mouth and inevitably enters the air passages in large quantities. The dust is not removed every day, but saturated with water in the great thoroughfares, sometimes it ferments in damp weather, and at other times ascends again under the heat of the summer sun as atmospheric dust." If we are to believe the microscope

this dust is animated, and consequently ever a source of contagious disease.

London is estimated to contain within its borders one-tenth of the entire population of England, Scotland, and Ireland. Years ago Henry Mayhew calculated that it contained one-fourth more people than Pekin, and two-thirds more than Paris, more than twice as many as Constantinople, four times as many as St. Petersburg, five times as many as Vienna or New York or Madrid, nearly seven times as many as Berlin, eight times as many as Amsterdam, nine times as many as Rome, fifteen times as many as Copenhagen, and seventeen times as many as Stockholm. About three-fourths of the population are on the Northern bank of the Thames, and the remaining quarter, on the Southern bank. The death rate is lower on the South than on the North. From Barnet to Croydon, from Richmond to Romford, London extends almost in a continuous line. When the stone in Panyer's Alley was placed on its present site, three centuries since, the circumference was about five miles.

The City of London consists of 98 parishes, some of them of small extent, but very wealthy. The me-

metropolis is divided into 39 different poor-law districts, some of them parishes and some of them unions, but each managing separately their own poor. Some of the workhouses attached to the unions are perfect parishes, containing upwards of 1000 persons, with schools and chapels. Most of them have separate schools in the country; and now it is proposed—indeed one building has already been erected for that purpose—to build large asylums in the country for the relief of the poor sick, and infirm and aged. In the third week of January, 1869, the total number of paupers in the metropolis was 149,885, of which number 36,852 received indoor relief. In 1865 the average relief given to the outdoor poor in the metropolitan districts was 1*s.* 2½*d.* a head per week. In the City of London Union the relief was 2*s.* 4½*d.*; in Paddington, 1*s.* 11½*d.*; in Marylebone, 1*s.* 11*d.*, whilst in such districts as St. George's, Southwark, and St. Giles's, Whitechapel, it was respectively 9¾*d.*, 8¼*d.*, and 8*d.*, thus showing that the poorer are the districts and the greater the need, the scantier is the relief given.

Of the entire house-tax levied in England quite one-half is paid by the metropolis.

In a speech of the Rev. J. H. Wilson, Secretary of the Home Mission Society, an attempt was made to illustrate the various conditions of the people as follows :—Assuming a town contains 10,000 people, he tells us, London has as many Jews as would fill two towns—this is a grievous error to begin with. The rev. gentleman very much underrates the number of Jews in London ; but let that pass ; as many workers on a Sunday as would fill ten towns, and as many habitual gin-drinkers as would fill fourteen towns. More persons than would fill ten towns are taken off the streets in a state of intoxication ; two towns might be filled with fallen women ; one town with gamblers ; two with children trained in crime ; three with thieves and receivers of stolen goods ; half a town with Italians ; two with French ; four with Germans ; while there are as many Irish as would fill the city of Dublin, and more Roman Catholics than would fill the City of Rome. In connection with London crime and ignorance and pauperism observe the number of public-houses and beer-shops. They are set down at 10,000. There is one baker for every 1206 persons ; one butcher for every 1533 ; one grocer for

every 1800; and one publican for every 668 of the inhabitants. Give, said a writer in the *Cornhill*, every public-house or beer-shop in London an average frontage of twenty-one feet, and we shall find, if placed side by side, they would make a row of houses thirty-nine miles in length. A little while ago the returns of a large public-house in the Edgware-road were advertised as 250*l.* a week, an amount equal to the whole expenditure for wine, beer, and spirits of the Athenæum, Reform, and Conservative clubs put together.

During the last ten years the population of London has increased one-sixth, but the pauper part of it one-half. Of this large class the sick and the impotent form, it is estimated by Dr. Stallard, 95-hundredths. During the same interval of time it is a fact that the expenditure has only increased at the rate of 30 per cent. According to Dr. Hawksley there are in London 100,000 children destitute of proper guardianship, and exposed for the most part to the training of beggars and thieves. It appears there are in London 637 day, evening, and Sunday ragged-schools, 64 reformatories and industrial schools, and 36 penitentiaries. It is

evident that there is an ample field of usefulness opened up for them all. The charities of London are immense—quite competent to grapple with the work imposed upon them, if properly directed. “The poor in London,” wrote the Rev. W. Starr, long rector of Christ Church, Spitalfields, and now canon of Canterbury, “may be born for nothing, nursed for nothing, clothed for nothing, educated for nothing; they may be put out apprentice for nothing, and have medicine and medical attendance all their lives for nothing. The pauper is thus born, nursed, clothed, fed, educated, established, and physicked all for nothing. He begins a pauper and dies a pauper; and at the expense of the parish he is furnished with shroud, coffin, pall, and burial-ground.” Dr. Hawksley estimates that the pauper makes a good thing of it. He argues that if one-eighth of the whole population, or 400,000 persons, were dependent on the other seven-eighths, the begging classes would secure each 17*l.* a head for every man, woman, or child; or every family of five persons 85*l.* per annum, with 50,000*l.* for the expenses of collection and distribution; that is assuming that the Doctor’s estimate is correct—and those

who are best informed say that it is — that in London 7,000,000*l.* were spent annually on the poor.

In Fry's Handbook of Charities the gross receipts, according to Dr. Hawksley of 616 institutions, are 3,857,119*l.* Of these are many whose sphere of operation is either not in London or only partially, particularly the Educational Grant of the Privy Council and the Missionary Societies. The sum thus deducted is 1,144,655*l.*, leaving a balance for London of 2,710,655*l.* These charities are thus described by the Doctor :—1st. 181 charities for the relief of diseases, bodily and mental, 646,392*l.*; 2nd. 537 charities for the relief of bodily wants, as food, dwelling, clothes, 2,110,936*l.*; 3rd. 324 charities for educational, moral, and religious purposes, 1,454,312*l.*; and 4th. miscellaneous sources, such as the special fund for East-end distress, interest of Mr. Peabody's last gift, one-third of endowed charities not being included in Fry's Handbook, and sums sent to the poor-box at 13 police-courts, amounting in all to 114,000*l.* The public charities are thus estimated to have an income of 4,225,640*l.* Two hundred and eighty charities,

writes Mr. Hicks, not including the endowed hospitals of St. Thomas's, Guy's, or Bartholomew's, nor any of the local or City charities, it appears in 1867 had an income of 1,539,224*l.* Dr. Stallard further puts down 559,000*l.* dispensed by and through the clergy of all denominations and their congregations, and for house charity at the rate of 1*s.* per annum for half the houses in the metropolis. In the next place there is personal charity, including the pence given to beggars and crossing-sweepers ; the sixpences and shillings given to the link boys at the doors of theatres and concert-rooms ; the occasional penny to the boy who calls a cab or carries a parcel. The sum thus raised is estimated at a million. Lastly, there is the provision of the State, which last year was nearly 1,200,000*l.* " We have," thus writes Dr. Stallard, " a total of—

A. Public Charity	£4,225,640
B. Local Charity	559,000
C. House and Personal	2,520,000
D. State Charity	1,200,000
	<hr/>
Total	8,504,640''

This sum is equal to 4s. 3d. a week all the year round for 800,000 persons, and ought to be more than sufficient for every form of misery." In London there are near upon 2000 centres from whence this enormous charity is dispensed. May we not, in asking what is the influence of this enormous expenditure, doubt its being an unmixed benefit? John Howard's maxim, "make men diligent and they will be honest," is as true, if not truer, of paupers than of criminals.

Of one form of charity we may quote an official condemnation. The Registrar-General says—"The indiscriminate manner in which gratuitous medical relief is afforded at the hospitals tends to encourage in the workman habits of improvidence." It appears, in the year ending December, 1868, no less than 1,823,752 persons were relieved gratuitously at the London hospitals, a fact indicating an abuse of charity somewhere. 56,000 persons, it is estimated by a medical man, are temporarily disabled annually in London by a disease exclusively the result of vice.

In the metropolitan parishes, between the 1st of July, 1867, and the 1st of January, 1868, that is, in

six months, no fewer than 666 persons were convicted of using false weights and measures. Most of the offences were committed in those parts of the metropolis which have a large number of poor. Lewisham furnishes 63, Woolwich 94, Deptford 97, and Westminster 100. On the other hand, the Paddington and the Hanover-square divisions, which contain many wealthy people, present no convictions ; and though Marylebone, which is also a wealthy district, has to complain of 36, a great proportion of the offenders are believed to have erred through carelessness or negligence, rather than design. Thus in poor circles the shopkeeper presumes on the utter helplessness of his customer, and treats him as he likes. In such places as Whitechapel, we hear of typhus, the inevitable result of pauperism ; no wonder that while the population decreases the ratio of sickness increases. In 1860 the out-door pauper cases in that parish numbered 11,392 ; in 1867 they had increased to 17,181 ; this year they will be as many as 20,000. Mr. Liddle, the medical officer of health, expresses his inability to account for the annually increasing number of cases of pauper sickness and deaths, except by the fact that a change

has taken place in the physical condition of the people, so that they are now less able to bear up against the ravages of disease. "They require," he says, "a larger amount of nutritious food, fire, and clothing than formerly; and where the weekly wages of the labouring classes have not increased they are unable to procure these necessities in sufficient quantities." Dr. Stallard writes that in Bethnal-green there is scarcely a male fit for military service.

As an illustration of London pauperism, let us take a case which went the round of the papers a little while since:—An inquest, it seems, was held on George Henry Pritchard, a man in the prime of life (he was aged forty-three), who began business as a cigar-maker, with a capital of 3000*l*. Misfortunes fell upon him; he became surety for a friend, and bankruptcy ensued. For the last three years he had gained a precarious living by making polishing-powder, and hawking it from house to house, but lately he had been too ill to do that; and for himself, his sick wife, his little boy, his four little girls, and baby, there was nothing but half a loaf in the morning, and another half at night. On this poor

diet Pritchard got worse, till one Sunday morning he stumbled, fell on his face, and, as his children thought, slept. The wife was too ill to be told, and the little ones did not know that that sleep of their father's was of that kind which knows no waking. All that Sunday the father laid lifeless on the floor, to the sorrow and wonder no doubt of the little group of wan and withered ones around. On Monday morning the little boy told his sister to wake the father. "I can't make him hear!" she replied, "when I shout ever so loud in his ear!" The little boy, even not then knowing that his father was dead, fetched a good Samaritan living close by, who soon discovered the real state of affairs. In his haste to reach the deceased, he was about to tread on a bundle, when an exclamation from the boy—"That was mother!" discovered to him the fact that the wife was lying there in her last gasp. Another hour and she would have joined her husband—but it is needless to fill up the sad outline of this domestic tragedy. Suffice it to say the poor man was buried at the expence of the parish—the mother and children were passed on to the workhouse, where,

under the combined influence of love and delirium, as she lay struggling between life and death, the little Ada kept moaning all night long, "It is the last piece of bread—keep it for the baby!"

We prosecute men for cruelty to animals; yet the poor are often treated with a cruelty which leads to fatal consequences, and few have anything to say on their behalf. A little while ago, for instance, an inquest was held at the Market-house, Poplar, on the body of Catharine Siddle, aged forty-five, a woman who had been healthy all her life, and who died of a slight attack of strangulated hernia, which could easily have been relieved had she been seen by a competent person. The parish surgeon, in his defence, pleaded—and very properly—that he had more patients on his books than he could possibly attend to. Again, at the King's Arms Tavern, Potter's-lane, Kensington, an inquest was held on the body of Eleanor Miller, aged forty-four. The husband, an excavator, out of work, stated that she had been ailing for some time. The doctor, who had seen her once, said that he could not come again unless the poor man got an

order. For this purpose the husband went to the workhouse, where he waited till four o'clock in vain. In answer to the question what he ought to do, as he had neither food, medicine, clothing, nor bedding for his sick wife, the relieving officer said, "Do the best you can, and come here again on Monday." On Monday the woman required no parochial relief; she was dead. And what was the verdict? Manslaughter of course, replies the indignant reader. My dear sir, nothing of the kind. "Death from diseased heart, from natural causes, accelerated by want of proper nourishment, and other privations." The verdict contained a certain amount of truth: but did not this "painful case," as the coroner termed it, require something more to be said? A few days since, at Shadwell, a poor woman committed suicide. For six months her family of four, one an infant at the breast, had been living on six shillings a week, she herself earning threepence a day by stitching slop shirts *at a penny each!* the husband having refused to appeal to the union—and no wonder. He was a respectable, hard-working man; and to such as he the union is a place of infamy by all means to be

shunned; not what it should be—the legitimate resort of the deserving poor in a season of severe, and let us hope, temporary distress. We need not continue our black list, though it were easy to do so. The revelations of the *Lancet* commissioners, as to the wretched state of the county workhouses, must be fresh in the readers' minds. More than enough has been said to show that in this wealthy Christian land of ours there is, as regards the administration of parochial relief, an amount of official mismanagement and cruelty perfectly shocking to contemplate. A year or two ago Mr. Farnall explained to the Workhouse Infirmaries Association that the workhouses were crowded with aged and infirm people because they could not live upon $7\frac{1}{2}d.$ per head per week, the average out-door relief administered at Bethnal-green. How penny wise and pound foolish is this mode of procedure is clear when we state, that at that time the poor-rates in Bethnal-green were nearly ten shillings in the pound.

In the first week of January, some few years since, a poor woman named Martha Duke was brought up at the Thames Police-office, charged with attempting

to commit suicide. She was a poor needlewoman, and found the misery of that mode of life greater than could be borne. Speaking of needlewomen in general, Mr. Burch, the resident medical officer of the London Hospital, stated that "a large number of patients had been under his care, and he had carefully investigated a considerable number of cases, and was satisfied that needlewomen were the most ill-paid class of people and the most hard-working on earth. They were miserably paid," he added, "and he knew that numbers of them, with constitutions broken down, earned from 3s. to 4s. per week only, and for that scanty pittance were compelled to work from three o'clock in the morning till ten at night. They soon became enfeebled by insufficient diet and overwork, and when broken down either had recourse to suicide or prostitution."

Let the reader walk with us to a fashionable clothing establishment—a mart, we believe, as it is called. The building, as you approach it, seems a palace. It is redolent with polished mahogany and plate-glass and gilt. You pass it when the lamps are lit, and you think of the Arabian Nights. It is illuminated as if peace had just been proclaimed,

or some great national desire had been realized. You enter with cash, and all is fair and smooth within. Whatever you want in the way of apparel is there, and at a price for which no honest tradesman can afford to sell it. Honest! asks the reader, is not the man honest? Does he steal the cloth? Certainly not. Does he not pay rent, and taxes, and wages? Most certainly he does. Do not his creditors all get twenty shillings in the pound? Most undoubtedly they do; the law protects them, and with them the man, willing or not, must keep himself right. So far as they are concerned, honesty is the best policy. How, then, does he make his profit? How is this monster establishment maintained? Out of what fund is it that its glitter and glare are paid for? We shall now see. Come down this stinking court—go up those creaking stairs—enter that miserable garret. Look at those men, who know nothing of labour but its curse, and of life but its misery. Mark the haggard faces already stamped with the impress of death. If you can bear the polluted atmosphere, you will hear from these men how they toil from early morning far into the night for two shillings a day; how for them

the fine air, and the golden sunshine, and the rest of the Sabbath, exist not ; and it is by them, by their sweat and blood and sinew, that the profit is made. And now go back and look into the gilded shop, and it will seem to you a Golgotha—a place of skulls. Is another illustration needed ? Up in yon miserable chamber, without fire—without food—without furniture—almost without clothes, a poor woman is stitching to earn the few pence by which she prolongs life and its misery. Once youth was hers, with its bright hopes and joys ; but they are gone, and with an aching heart and pallid brow she plies her daily task. Is it wonderful that, wanting coals or something better than dry bread, the shirt or the waistcoat should be pawned ? Is it not more wonderful that such bleak and hopeless poverty should be as honest as it is ? And yet from such poor, forlorn, forgotten women as these proceed the profits which pay for dazzling window and gorgeous pile.

Bear in mind also that corporeal labourers are short lived and endure many physical evils. The coal-whipper's work—the most wasteful, unscientific, and pernicious expenditure of human muscle ever

devised, writes Dr. Chambers—overstrains the fibres of the heart, and the organs become diseased. Painters again are liable to palsy and colic from the use of white lead. The tailor sits till the stomach and bowels become disordered, the spine twisted, the gait shambling, and the power of taking the exercise necessary to health obliterated. Shoemakers and bootmakers suffer equally from a constrained position and the pressure of the last against the stomach. Heartburn and indigestion are so common among them that a pill in the pharmacopœia is called the cobbler's pill. The lucifer-match makers inhale phosphorus to the destruction of their lower jaws. The gilder becomes afflicted with mercurial paralysis. Then there is the baker's malady, which carries off a large proportion of its victims. Dressmakers are peculiarly subject to the attacks of consumption; workwomen constantly suffer from varicose veins. Every spring (writes a London clergyman) many die from the exhaustion produced by insufficient food during the previous months.

We hear much of the dwellings of the poor. In 1861 Mr. James Harvey, Chairman of the West

London Union, wrote :—" Some time since the relieving officer and one of the guardians of this Union visited Plumtree-court, Holborn, which contains 27 houses without back yards, and, with few exceptions, without back lights. These houses were occupied by 676 men, women, and children. In one room, 10 ft. by 13, and 8 ft. 6 in. high, there were 13 persons living and sleeping—viz., 2 men, 5 women, and 6 children. In another house, 17 ft. long and 16 ft. wide (including the passage), with ground-floor, first-floor, and attic, there were 69 persons living and sleeping, with only one convenience in the basement. On another occasion, when our relieving officer visited a house in this court, between twelve and one o'clock in the morning, for the apprehension of a man who had deserted his wife, in attempting to go into one room he was compelled to wait until the inmates had risen from the floor behind the door, so that the door could be opened. The people lay so thick on the floor that he had to be cautious in stepping between them. In this room there was one child suffering from the measles and another from the small-pox. On opening the door the stench was so great that the police

officer who accompanied him was obliged to withdraw. From this court alone the parish has had to pay extra fees to the medical officer for the confinement of an incredible number of young women and 'widows' of illegitimate children. The cases continually being brought before our board of once respectable women who have fallen under such conditions are truly heart-rending, and form one of the greatest difficulties with which boards of guardians have to deal." It is to be feared that recent legislation has but partially affected this enormous evil of overcrowding. Many streets have ceased to exist, or rather have succumbed to the railway; and it is a fact undoubtedly that such buildings as the Peabody Fund erects are not for the London poor, but for men in a respectable position in life. The railway companies might, by erecting workmen's cottages and running workmen's trains, do much to remove the ills they have created; but at present the appeal to them has been in vain. We may not wonder that the public-houses and the gin-palaces, and the worst and vilest of cheap resorts are full; as it is a fact that for thousands in London there is no such place as home.

Another evil also threatening mischief to all classes of the community is the existence of a cheap and filthy literature, extensively circulating among the lads of London. In many ways it is clear how extensive is this grave evil. In the annual report of the Rev. Frederick Jones, the ordinary of Newgate, on this subject, he says, "He has conversed with all the boys brought into the gaol, and particularly with those who appeared to have had a good education, and to have been brought up by respectable parents ; and he had discovered that all these boys, without one exception, had been in the habit of reading those cheap periodicals published for the alleged amusement of the youth of both sexes. He found that the stories which produced the greatest impressions upon their minds were those in which the worst scoundrels were successful in wickedness. One boy in particular had set before his mind a hero of great strength, who flinched from no crime of violence, as his example, and endeavoured to improve his own strength in order to resemble him. These boys generally visited the theatres, and the strongest impression was always produced by the plays in which the vilest villain was the hero. In

many cases the boys had obtained money by means of forgery, and then went from town to town, principally watering places, and squandered it in the most absurd manner."

Further testimony on this subject may be taken from the well known writer, "The Journeyman Engineer." As one of the working classes he speaks with authority. "I can confidently say," he writes, "that eighty per cent. of the boys in this rank of life, between eight and fifteen years of age, who do read, read works of this class." If we gather something of the demoralizing effect of this from the police reports, we after all get but a very imperfect idea of the mischief done. The young criminal generally commences by robbing his father and mother. The ties of flesh and blood are strong—the juvenile thief is saved for this time: perhaps he becomes altogether reformed. Equally pernicious also are the illustrated papers devoted to the foul record of crime. In low neighbourhoods you can scarce walk a few yards without perceiving, in some little dirty news-shop, a hideous pictorial representation of some horrible murder or other appalling deed, which, independently of its want of truthfulness, and of its

aim being simply sensational, must have a bad effect upon those who are not at once disgusted and repelled by it. It is said insanity is on the increase, and that murders due to ungovernable impulsiveness are becoming more common. Can we, seeing how great is the sale of these papers, be surprised to find such is the case? The half taught and the dull and stupid gloat over such representations. To them in such sights there is a mysterious attraction. They lack the healthy brain which teaches others to shun them. The natural aversion to crime is weakened, the fancy is seized with some strange act of violence, and possibly the picture may suggest the deed. It is difficult to define clearly how great is the demoralizing influence of such a pernicious literature. Out of the heart are the issues of life. Crime must be the natural result of a pictorial literature filthy, sensational, obscene.

The annual statistical return furnished from Guildhall to the Home Secretary, for the year ending the 29th September last, has been completed by Mr. Davie, the Assistant Clerk. It showed that during the year there had been 6571 prisoners, of whom 5723 were males and 848 females. Of these,

264 males and 33 females were proceeded against on indictments, of whom 26 males and 5 females were known thieves ; 10 were prostitutes ; 29 males and 4 females were suspicious characters ; 2 males and 1 female were habitual drunkards ; 154 males and 9 females had previous good characters, and 53 males and 4 females had characters which were unknown. The summary convictions comprised 5459 males and 815 females. Of these 41 males and 13 females were known thieves ; 37 were prostitutes, 124 males and 140 females were vagrants, tramps, and others without visible means of subsistence ; 121 males and 27 females were suspicious characters, 143 males and 89 females were habitual drunkards, 4132 males and 237 females had previous good characters, and 898 males and 272 females had characters which were unknown.

The returns of the metropolitan police of course are on a much larger scale. It appears that within the last year no less than 63,042 persons were taken into custody by them. Of the 60,000 or so arrested, 27,450 were discharged by the magistrates ; 31,698 were summarily convicted ; 3894 were committed for trial ; 3009 were convicted and sentenced ; 709

were acquitted ; and against 176 only were bills ignored or prosecutions not enforced. It is not of course surprising that drunkenness should have contributed materially to swell these statistics. The number of arrests for drunkenness and for drunken and disorderly conduct were 16,941¹, although it is only right to remark that more than half of these cases were dismissed by the magistrates without conviction. For offences against property committed without violence there were 6317 summary convictions, and 2246 convictions upon indictments. For offences in which violence was used towards the person, there were 182 arrests, but only 66 convictions, and of this number 57 were cases of cutting and wounding with intent. Then for offences which are usually regarded as of a more grossly immoral character there were 61 arrests, but only 23 convictions. Of the persons taken into custody during the year, only 61 (all males) are described as having had a superior education. 1635 males and 49 females could read and write well ; but the great bulk of the prisoners, 54,134, were only able to read, or read and write imperfectly, and 7163 could do neither one nor the other. The total value of

the property lost by felonies committed during the year was 81,729*l.*, but of this amount, property to the value of 18,452*l.* was recovered.

The returns present an extraordinary fact with regard to the number of persons who are missed and of whom no account is subsequently given. The number reported as lost or missing during the year was no less than 5034, of whom only 2350 were restored.

The Home Office returns for 1866 state that in the metropolitan police districts, including the City, the number of habitual criminals at large was 14,496. This number was made up as follows:—Known thieves and depredators, 2734; receivers of stolen goods, 199; suspected persons, 2290; prostitutes, 5554; vagrants and tramps, 3719.

The perils of the streets are not exclusively from the roughs and criminal classes. Last year there were no fewer than 200 deaths from injuries caused by horses and vehicles. Of this mortality one half, or nearly so, was distinctly traced to waggon and carts.

Captain Shaw's report on the Metropolitan Fire Brigade for 1867 contains some curious statistics.

In all there were 1397 fires during the year. To this list the private houses contributed most, then the lodging-houses, then the public-houses ; then the drapers', the bootmakers', and the bakers' shops. The candle is the chief cause of fires. The brigade has greatly increased in efficiency since it has been under the control of the Board of Works.

There are two worlds in London—the rich and the poor. I have said enough of the latter ; let us now speak of the former. In the City proper as much as a million an acre has been given for land. The ordinary revenue of the Corporation for 1868 (exclusive of the rents and profits of the Bridge House Estates) amounted to 618,848*l.* The rents reserved by leases of premises within the City realized 57,152*l.* 8*s.* 3¼*d.*, those in the county of Middlesex and Surrey, 12,229*l.* 9*s.* 1¼*d.*, and the like of premises within the City and counties, held by tenants-at-will, 50*l.* 1*s.* The Finsbury Estate realized 44,504*l.* 13*s.* 5½*d.*, and the rents received from occupiers of premises in Farringdon-road, erected as dwellings for the labouring classes, 3177*l.* 5*s.* The Irish quit-rents produced 192*l.* 3*s.* 10*d.*, and the proportion of the profits of

an estate in Ireland, 336*l.* There was also received the sum of 4689*l.* 15*s.* 1½*d.* in the shape of fines for the renewal of leases. The tolls and rents of the several markets yielded in all 48,787*l.* 19*s.* 2*d.*, viz. : — Leadenhall, 3366*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.* ; Newgate, 5875*l.* 5*s.* 1*d.* ; Farringdon, 1253*l.* 16*s.* 7*d.* ; Smithfield (Hay), 276*l.* ; Billingsgate (exclusive of tolls), 5754*l.* 7*s.* 7*d.* ; and Metropolitan Cattle Market, 32,262*l.* 0*s.* 5*d.* The duties on the metage of corn, waterbailage and groundage, fruit meting, and stamping weights and measures, 18,581*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.* The bequests were small, 135*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* ; brokers' rents and fees and the admission of brokers, were 6832*l.* 15*s.* ; the Lord Mayor's Court office fees, 5759*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.* ; justiciary fees, 1219*l.* 11*s.* 5*d.* ; reimbursement on account of prisons, 4601*l.* 0*s.* 4¼*d.* ; reimbursement on account of criminal prosecutions, 1697*l.* 7*s.* 5*d.* ; officers' surplus fees and profits, 10,397*l.* 8*s.* 4*d.* ; sundry and casual receipts, 1251*l.* 8*s.* 8*d.* The dividends on stock received, after deducting an amount overcharged in the previous year of 845*l.* 17*s.* 1*d.*, were 878*l.* 9*s.* 3*d.* The interest on purchase-money of property sold by the Corporation, but not yet paid for, amounted to 2787*l.* 18*s.* 10*d.* The rents

and profits of the Bridge House Estates during the same period were 44,777*l.* 8*s.* 7*d.*

London, not the city alone, had 10,500 distinct streets, squares, circuses, crescents, terraces, villas, rows, buildings, places, lanes, courts, alleys, mews, yards, rents. The paved streets, according to a return published in 1856, number over 5000, and exceed 2000 miles in length. These streets were made at the cost of 14,000,000*l.*, and there is expended on their maintenance as much as 1,800,000*l.* per annum. Since the Metropolitan Board of Works has been in existence—that is, almost twelve years, it has spent a million a year, and sanctioned the formation of 1300 new streets. Thirteen gas companies supply London with gas ; they have a capital of nearly 5,000,000*l.* There are 2000 miles of gas pipes ; the cost of gas lighting is upwards of 2,000,000*l.*, and in the city alone one million tons of coals are consumed for this purpose. It has more than 400,000 lights, and more than 14,000,000 cubic feet of gas are burned every night. Along the streets an enormous quantity of water rushes. Last year, says the Registrar-General, the supply was equivalent to 26 gallons daily for each person. Drainage

works have been erected, by means of which the sewage of London is cast into the Thames, from the northern outfall, at the rate of 105,000—at the southern outfall, to the extent of 180,000 tons a day.

The traffic of the streets and under the streets of London is perpetual. People are always on the move, and no one knows his neighbour's business. Some years ago a respected citizen died without making a will. His wife and children stepped in to administer; but another wife and other children also made their claim. It was then discovered that this steady man had two homes, and that he spent a quiet, domestic life alternately at either. In each he had a wife and grown-up family. The second wife knew nothing of the first, the first had never dreamed of the second; but each regarded him as a commercial traveller, bound by business to make occasional journeys from home. Without supposing this to be a common case, it is evident that the traffic of the London streets must be very considerable. At Christmas time especially the tide of life is rapid. During the holidays last year, that is, from December

24 to 30, the Underground railway, including the Metropolitan, the Metropolitan district, St. John's Wood, Hammersmith, and City lines, carried no less than 800,072 passengers. Alas ! it is to be feared, that not all were disciples of Father Mathew on Boxing-day. No less than 181 persons seriously injured from indulgence in something stronger than tea, were taken off to the hospitals.

Independently of festivals and holidays, the necessities of life in London create an enormous traffic. Papa has business in the city even if he live in the suburbs ; and mamma has passionate longings to patronize the splendid shops of the West-end. Last year the Metropolitan Railway Company alone carried under ground twenty-five millions of passengers ; and the lines north of the Thames, fifty millions. On the other lines, the Suburban population, though rapidly increasing, is not so great. The Metropolitan trains are daily 700. As many pass the Clapham Junction every twenty-four hours ; and in the same space of time about 530 run in and out of Cannon-street. The number of local London trains is daily 3600, besides 340 which travel much longer distances. During the busiest part of the

day it is calculated 2000 train stoppages are made. Last year there were 60,000 cabs in London, which paid to Government a duty of 100,000*l*. The London General Omnibus Company ran 600 omnibuses 6,177,632 miles, and carried in the half year ending Dec. 1868, 20,757,127 persons. On one occasion in 1862, between 12.20 p.m. and 1.20 p.m. there were counted in Cheapside 291 omnibuses, 573 cabs, other vehicles, 294. In May, 1860, there came into the city 57,675 vehicles and 706,621 passengers. In addition to the sleeping population, the City is the daily resort of three-quarters of a million. London, during the Exhibition of 1861, accommodated six millions eighty-seven thousand visitors. Last year 1,469,942 persons visited the National Galleries at Trafalgar-square and South Kensington. To defend the City and the suburbs against the Fenians 52,974 Londoners became special constables.

Of the wealth of London we can best get an idea by particulars : for instance, take the London Docks. Annually 1,000,000 tons of shipping enter, besides 30,000 to 40,000 barges which pay no dues. In its warehouses are always stored between 200,000 and 300,000 tuns of the rarest wines, the

choicest silks, of the sweetest of sugars, and of the finest flavoured of teas. Although it employs regularly from 3000 to 4000 people, crowds of supernumeraries are always found waiting outside for employment, at 4*d.* an hour. The great tobacco warehouse covers five acres of ground. Annually, it is calculated, there are imported into London 6000 or 7000 tons of pepper, 50,000 tons of rice, 100,000 tons of tallow, 400,000 tons of jute, and 100,000,000 pounds of tea.

An accumulation of figures confuses rather than enlightens the reader; nevertheless we must add a few more. The Post Office alone employs in London more than 3200 officials; the firm of Overend, Gurney, and Co., as bill-brokers, discounted bills to the extent of 75,000,000*l.* a year. The real value of the destructible property within six miles of the Post Office is estimated at 900,000,000*l.* There were 9722 probates, and 4604 letters of administration granted in 1867 in the London Courts of Probate, relating to property sworn to as not exceeding 54,111,975*l.* In the London Stock Exchange there are dealings daily in railway shares representing 400,000,000*l.* or 500,000,000*l.* The respective stocks constituting

the National Debt of Great Britain may be taken at between 700,000,000*l.* and 800,000,000*l.*; in banking shares there is a capital of more than 30,000,000*l.*; then there is a large amount invested in canals, gas and water, steam, telegraph and dock companies ; about 300,000,000*l.* of American railways, as much in European railways, perhaps 100,000,000*l.* in our colonies, besides an enormous aggregate of foreign stocks and loans. In 1861 the total amount of capital subscribed for the Metropolitan Joint Stock Banks was 13,750,000*l.*; capital paid up, 3,561,105*l.*; current and deposit accounts, 56,783,354*l.* The annual clearance of the City Banks is over six thousand millions. London is the bank of the whole world. The business of the Bank of England is conducted by about 800 clerks, whose salaries amount to about 200,000*l.*; the Bank has about 27,000,000*l.* in circulation; not fewer than 60 folio volumes or ledgers are daily filled with writing in keeping the accounts ; in its copper-printing department 28,000 bank notes are thrown off daily, and so accurately is the number indicated by machinery, that to purloin a single note without detection is an impossibility. In 1865, the total

tonnage, British and foreign, inwards and outwards, entered at the port of London, was 10,461,195 ; while at Liverpool, the next on the list, the return is 8,235,152. In 1862 the exports from London were of the value of 31,523,812*l.*; in 1863, 36,211,510*l.* On an average the City merchants pay custom duties amounting to 12,014,902*l.* per annum. All other ports annually but 11,683,753*l.*

Eighty thousand tons a month, besides coal, pass through the London station of the London and Birmingham Railway. That railway is one of the largest carriers. The Camden-town station occupies no less than fourteen acres of ground, and from it nightly depart 670 waggons laden with luggage, in 27 trains. In 1867 the same line brought into London 49,513 cattle, 194,531 sheep, 54,718 pigs, mostly Irish. But it is on Essex, and Suffolk, and Norfolk, and the opposite coast that London chiefly depends for food. In the twelve months ending June last year the Eastern Counties rail brought into London 306,049 sheep from the eastern counties, 9145 from Antwerp, 35,970 from Rotterdam, 67,452 beasts, 41,900 pigs, and 3276 calves. By the same conveyance we also

received 610,330 sacks of flour, 266,740 quarters of wheat, 620,551 quarters of malt, besides 38,729 tons of beer, 21,531 tons of potatoes, 24,435 tons of fish. In 1867 the total number of live beasts brought into London by rail was 172,300, and 1,147,609 sheep, and dead meat equal in amount to 112,000 cattle and 1,267,000 sheep; a quantity which a quarterly reviewer calculates, if ranged in a column twelve feet deep, would extend from London to the other side of Aberdeen. By other railways we also received at the same time half a million quarters of wheat, besides a million and a quarter sacks of flour, 171,034 sacks of malt, 155,000 tons of potatoes and other vegetables. How we drain Normandy of its eggs is evident, when we state that weekly three millions are brought to town by the Brighton and South Western lines.

In 1855 the Metropolitan Cattle Market at Islington was opened. In 1867 there were sold in it 157,114 British and 108,640 foreign beasts. It contains accommodation for the sale of 150,000 beasts and 350,000 sheep and calves annually. The new meat and poultry market, Smithfield, is a very

formidable affair. To form the railway depôt under it three millions and a half of cubic feet, weighing about 172,000 tons, were removed. To this market alone 200,000 tons of meat, poultry, game, butter, &c., are now annually consigned. All London consumes 100,000 tons of fish, of which thirty years ago 85 per cent. was brought by water; now only 30,000 tons come by water. In 1867, the Great Northern, the Great Western, and the Midland railway companies brought to London 36,000 tons of meat; the London, Chatham and Dover brings weekly about twenty tons of game and poultry. The Midland railway station at King's Cross is the largest in the world; the arched roof measures one-third more than that of the Cannon-street terminus, and covers eleven lines of rails. Under these lines and the passenger platform are four acres of cellarage for stores. In the lighting of the station more than two acres and a half of glass are used.

Dr. Smiles is our authority for the following particulars respecting milk:—Last year the total quantity delivered in London by the Great Western railway was 1,514,836 gallons, or an average of

30,000 gallons a week. The largest proportion of this milk was brought from beyond Swindon, in Wiltshire, about one hundred miles from London ; but considerable quantities were also brought from the Vale of Gloucester and from Somerset. The London and South-Western also is a great milk-carrying line, having brought as much as 1,480,272 gallons to London last year, or an average of 28,000 a week. The Great Eastern brought nearly the same quantity, 1,322,429 gallons, or an average of about 25,400 gallons a week. The London and North-Western ranks next, having brought 643,432 gallons in 1867 ; then the Great Northern, 455,916 gallons : the South-Eastern, 435,668 gallons ; and the Brighton, 419,254 gallons. The total quantity of milk delivered in London by railway last year was 6,309,446 gallons, or above 120,000 gallons a week. Yet this traffic, large though it may appear, is as yet but in its infancy, and in the course of a few more years it will be found very largely increased, according as facilities are provided for its accommodation and transit.

Ostend sends 600,000 rabbits annually ; Norway sends fish quite as bountifully. Dr. Winter estimates

that 35,000 persons are engaged in filling the dessert and the vegetable dishes of the metropolis.

It is now reckoned that the rateable value of property in the metropolis is 16,226,786*l*. The amount of profit charged under Schedule D to the income tax, was for the City 23,053,600*l*.; the rest of the metropolis, 18,972,278*l*. The rental of the City is now 2,109,935*l*. In 1811 it was but 565,243*l*., denoting an increased value of 273 per cent. The rental of the whole metropolis is 15,252,767*l*.

In the year ending Oct. 11, 1868, there were in England 9195 adjudications of bankruptcy; of these 3193 were in the London district courts.

The religious agency to guard all this property, and to train all this population, of which London is the centre, may be set down as follows:—In the city there are 104 churches, chapels, and synagogues, with 191 clergy and officiating ministers. Within a radius of twelve miles from the General Post Office there are, according to “Mackeson’s Guide to the Churches of London and its Suburbs,” 588

churches. According to the "Congregational Calendar" for 1869 the Independents have 230 chapels. There are 217 Baptist chapels; 41 Roman Catholic churches; 6 Scotch churches; 120 chapels of Methodists, Unitarians, Presbyterians, Calvinists, Welch, French, Swiss, Greek; and eleven Jewish Synagogues. There are besides 253 papers published in London, and nearly 600 magazines, of which 219 are of a decidedly religious character, representing the Church of England, Wesleyan Methodists, Baptists, Independents, and other Christian communities. It is chiefly, however, the middle classes that are thus brought under religious influences. The working men impartially avoid church and chapel alike. At a meeting of the Open-air Mission a few years since, Lord Shaftesbury affirmed that only two per cent. of the men of the working classes attended public worship. A calculation was made in Bethnal-green a short time ago, and it was found that out of a population of 180,000, only 2000 were in attendance at all the places of worship. These statements have never been questioned, and clearly imply that the poor man's church has not yet

appeared. In referring to a part of St. Pancras, a Church Society's report observed:—"Habits of Christian worship had never been learnt or were forgotten; children were left without Christian education or baptism, and with numbers the Christian creed, nominally accepted, was hardly more than a remote and indistinct memory." In the *British Quarterly* for 1866 it was stated, that the Church of England at that time provided sittings for 500,000, and the Nonconformist places of worship sittings for 357,976 persons. Besides, we hear of 350 city missionaries, 230 paid Bible women, each with her district and lady superintendent. The Parochial Mission Women's Fund employs 100 agents.

One sore evil in London life is the sale of bad drink and bad food. In spite of Acts of Parliament, and officers to see that they are properly enforced, articles of food and drink are adulterated, and the health of the community is seriously affected. Now, this is a question that affects us all, rich or poor; but the latter, of course, suffer the most. Sickness in either case represents suffering and pecuniary inconvenience. Life is too precious a boon to be

trifled with, and for those who shorten it or impair it merely to make an extra profit, no punishment can be too severe. Who can tell, for instance, the amount of suffering occasioned merely by eating sausages made of condemned meat? In the city of London, every quarter, tons of meat, and fish, and game are seized as unfit for human food. What will our readers think when we tell them that of this condemned food, even after it has been seized, there is reason to believe that a very large portion is made up into sausages, and, what is equally as bad, the butter-like fat obtained in the process of boiling, tainted as it is with the fat of horses, is used in the manufacture of butter? We get little pure. Dr. Letheby finds water in the milk, rice and alum in the bread, turmeric in the mustard, and confesses that our drinkers of genuine beer and fine sparkling ales are being poisoned by wholesale. He tells us that the publicans, almost without exception, reduce their liquor with water after receiving it from the brewer; the proportion in the better class of houses is nine gallons per puncheon, and in second-rate establishments the quantity of water is doubled. This we believe to be the best

part of the beverage, but to compensate for this, ingredients are used to strengthen the watered beer. The chief ingredients are roots and liquorice, to sweeten it; a bitter principle, as gentian and quassia; sumach and terra japonica, to give it astringency; a thickening matter, as linseed, to give a body; a colouring matter, as burnt sugar, to darken it; cocculus indicus, to give a false strength; and common salt, capsicum, copperas, and Dantzic spruce, to produce a head. In the case of ale its apparent strength is restored by means of bitters and sugarcandy. Now, it is nonsense to say men can use this stuff daily with impunity; sooner or later it must injure health and shorten life. It is not wholesome drink, whatever the publicans may say to the contrary. Ill health, loss of work, and loss of life, must be the result under this system. Some time ago, Dr. Letheby calculated the revenue was defrauded to the extent of 108,000*l.* per annum.

Those who know London life will know that I have not glanced at its darkest side: any man of the world will tell you infamies which I may not name here. I say nothing here of baby-farming

and the suggestive advertisements of the daily press. I do not go so far as Mr. Patmore, and affirm that in the higher ranks of life a young man is obliged to keep a mistress to avoid being laughed at ; but I can conceive of no city more sunk in licentiousness and rascality than ours. Paris, New York, Hamburg, Vienna, Brussels, may be as bad, but they cannot be worse. The poor are looked after by the police—visited by the city missionary ; their wants and woes are worked up into newspaper articles, and they live as it were in houses of glass. It is true that one half the world does not know how the other half lives ; but it is not true in the sense in which it is generally affirmed. Who ever has an idea that a pious Baronet, taking the chair at a religious meeting in Exeter Hall, will prove a felon ; that that house, eminent in the mercantile and philanthropic world, will sanction the circulation of forged dock warrants ; that that manager, about to engage in prayer at a meeting of directors, will turn out to be the manager of the greatest swindle of modern times ? Who sees a dishonoured suicide in the patriotic Sadleir, or in the philanthropic Redpath a convict for life, or in the dashing Robson

a maniac? Or in the swells who inhabit Tyburnia, directors of doubtful companies? If I tell you that respectable old gentleman now coming out of his club is going to inspect a fresh victim, whom some procuress has lured with devilish art, or that in yonder mansion in Regent's Park there are deeds done nightly unworthy of a Christian land, you will tell me that I am uncharitable; or if I point you to that well-appointed equipage in the Park, and tell you that the fair young girl that sits within has crushed many a young wife's heart, and has sent many a man to the devil before his time, you will tell me I exaggerate. I do nothing of the kind. If I were to tell what most men know—what every one knows, except those whose business it is to know it, and to seek to reform it—I should be charged with indelicacy, as if truth could be indelicate, and my book perhaps suppressed by the Society for the Suppression of Vice—if that abortion exists still. We are choked up with cant; almost everything we believe in is a lie. The prayer of Ajax should be ours,—Light—more light.

What are we to do?—to stand stock still, looking to heaven “with a frenzied air, as if to ask if a

God were there?" One can almost believe, with George Gilfillan, that the earth needs a new gospel and a new manifestation of divine power. From this low estate who is to rescue us? Not the aristocracy, perpetuating barbarous ideas in our midst,—that work is not honourable; whereas all true civilization points us to the fact, that man is only happy and virtuous as he is steadily industrious. Not our law-makers, who imprison our young lads in costly jails, where the criminals have luxuries denied to the poor; and then in Newgate, or at the public works, mix them all up together, that the comparatively innocent may learn to be adepts in crime. Not our religious, I fear, when, from the Archbishop of Canterbury down to Dr. Cumming, the cry is, If you have a proper translation of the Bible you will destroy the faith of the people. Not our trading classes, becoming richer and more sunk in flunkeyism every day. But it may be that these—

“Are graves from which a glorious phantom may
Burst to illumine our tempestuous day.”

Whom am I to blame? Not the victims, but the fathers, and mothers, and divines, and schoolmasters,

and governing classes. Father, you have given your bold, manly son an emasculated religion,—a religion that wilfully shuts its eyes, and will not look upon life as it is; and, immediately he goes into the world, away vanish all the pasteboard defences with which you childishly sought to guard him; and yet you will not confess that in inculcating religious creeds,—that in teaching children catechisms,—that in vaguely telling them to be good,—that in leading them to believe in forms rather than truths, you are only damming up for a while the passionate impulses of young blood, that they may ultimately exert a more tumultuous and irresistible sway. You take the little Arab of the streets, and, for acts of levity and wantonness which all boys commit, you send him to prison, at an age when you confess he is not a responsible creature, and then idiotically wonder that he turns out a criminal, and that he wars with society till he is hanged. You are surprised that woman, fond of praise, of dress, and pleasure, should prefer to walk the streets in silk and satin, to have a short life and a merry one, rather than slave and drudge, and end her days after all in a workhouse. You tone

down your fashionably educated daughters into automatons, and then wonder that hot youth finds domestic life tame and dull. Above all, do not go away with the idea that we have reached the utmost height of civilization,—that we are a model people,—that it is our mission to set up as teachers of religion to all mankind. Let us remember that the increase of crime and dissipation is a fact; that there can be no corrupter city than London; and that it must be so, so long as we make professions our practice so scandalously denies. I have heard Her Majesty's proclamation against vice and immorality read at quarter-sessions by men in whose reading it became a farce which the most ignorant bumpkin in court could relish. Now we are going to do wonders, the policeman is to supplement the parson, the wicked are to be hunted down. Is this the way seriously to set about moral reform? Routine and officialism in Church and State have made the outside of the sepulchre white enough; do we not need a little cleansing within?

CHAPTER II.

ARISTOCRATIC AMUSEMENTS.

LAST autumn the bearer of an illustrious name suddenly went down into an early and unhonoured grave. On one dull November morning it was announced that the Marquis of Hastings was no more. For some time it had been known that he was in embarrassed circumstances—that he was a fly in the spider's web, to borrow Admiral Rous's expressive metaphor—that he was tired of life—that he wished to die—that he was weary of a world of which his reckless folly had been the wonder and the jest and scorn; but it was hoped that a winter in Egypt, which country he intended visiting, might have restored his constitution, raised his spirits, and restored him to society penitent, and in a better state of mind. However, it was otherwise decreed. Worn out in the pursuit of

pleasure, a victim in person and in purse to fashionable dissipation, he passed away from the scene of folly at the early age of twenty-six. For this poor lad—for after all he was little more—what tenderness and sorrow we cannot but feel! How erroneous must have been his bringing up! What few friends could he have had! How he must have been preyed on by abandoned men and abandoned women, by the most ignorant of jockeys, by the lowest of horse-dealers, by debauchees and black-legs, by the filthy sharpers who fatten on human prey. For his few years of wild and passionate excitement how dearly had he to pay! For him life had many advantages. He was young; he was rich; he was a marquis. One of his ancestors had been Speaker of the Irish House of Commons. Another had been Governor-General of India. He represented a nobility dating as far back as 1324. Had he wished for an honourable career as a statesman, had he wished to be useful to his country or to exalt the honour of his house, how many of our leaders in Church and State would willingly have held out to him a helping hand, and heartily welcomed his accession to their

ranks. Alas ! his heart was given to phantom pleasures, and in the pursuit of them he lost his life. Had he been a ploughman he might have been alive now.

Many, many years back, when the Byron fever was at its height, Dr. Channing wrote to Miss Baillie—"That any talent, however stupendous, should have made such a man an idol to your sex, shows that you must divide with us the reproach too justly brought against our age of great moral degradation. I learn that there is not on the face of the earth a more corrupt class than the fashionable young men of England." The language is strong, but when we think of the marquis lately deceased, of the career of the notorious Windham, of the wild young noblemen who frequent the Haymarket, or go to places of public amusement in company with girls dressed up as young men ;—when we remember that at this time, when the new revolution has commenced, when the people have been admitted to political power, when the ancient institutions of the land are on their trial, the aristocracy neither in the upper nor the lower House of Parliament can furnish the Conservative

—that is, the aristocratic party—with a leader, at what other conclusion can we arrive? It is true that Lord Ranelagh has lent an additional interest to the beauty-giving or preserving cosmetics of Madame Rachel; that to the Duke of Beaufort we are indebted for the patronage of the pleasing and popular recreation known as “Aunt Sally;” that to the Hereditary Great Chamberlain of England we owe an illustration of human meanness, of which otherwise we could have formed no idea. It is true, also, that in many other ways the members of the Corinthian order whet if they do not gratify public curiosity. Still it is sad to see our young nobles born in the purple compelled to part with their ancestral estates, to have recourse to the money-lender, to flee the land in which their natural duties lie. Equally sad is it to see them abdicate their political position, to cease to be the nation’s chiefs and rulers; to permit their battle to be fought by nobodies with brains, to be ready to forget that in the time to come the only title to exalted rank will be exalted worth.

For this state of things aristocratic amusements must have much to answer. The consideration of

them is then a matter of importance, especially when we remember that fashions descend ; that

“’Tis from high life high characters are drawn,”—

that the rich and vicious love to do as the aristocracy do, and that even the costermonger in Whitechapel apes my lord—at any rate, gets as drunk as one.

The turf is emphatically the aristocratic amusement. Out-of-door life is always attractive, and never more so than in summer, when the landscape is clothed in beauty, when the skies are blue and the sun is bright. All who can, at such times rush from the crowded city and its daily toil, and according to their several natures find amusement more or less refined. Nor can the sternest moralist blame them. There is a time to be merry as well as sad—to work as well as to play ; and in a homely proverb the common sense of the country has expressed this golden truth. How common people amuse themselves we know well. They have their day out in a shilling van, or by a cheap excursion train, and are very rough and very jolly. If not members of a temperance society, they drink

a great deal of very bad beer, smoke a great deal of very bad tobacco, and come home dreadfully tired, with their money all gone, and often not sorry to remember that holidays are not of every-day occurrence. But we have a large class in our midst to whom life is a perpetual holiday—to whom the daily bread comes without the healthy daily toil—who know not how to kill time, and who become frivolous and cruel, and set the public a bad example, not from depravity of nature, but simply from want of thought. To these the excitement of the turf is ever an attraction. Many of them seem to live for it; as in our day the racing season seems endless. Our widowed queen must deeply lament the attachment of certain exalted personages to the pursuit of the turf. It is notorious that its impure atmosphere led her, in accordance with the advice of her illustrious husband, to withdraw from it as much as possible her support. It is certain that the turf has not improved in our day. It is equally certain that it cannot so long as our sporting nobles associate on an equality—chat and smoke with jockeys and trainers and other low-born people, and bet thousands and tens of thousands without any

other means of paying if the race should go against them than the money-lender, at whose command it is said they are compelled to take part in transactions of a questionable character. The Jockey Club is supposed to guard to a certain extent the honour of the turf, but their guardianship appears to be chiefly negative. The betting mania of our day—by which the nation at large is tainted—is due to the turf and its aristocratic supporters.

Last summer people were shocked with an account of the cruelties perpetrated at the aristocratic shooting matches at Fulham. It seemed to vulgar plebeians cruel sport, especially when it was remembered that the pigeons were half-starved in order that it might be easier to shoot them. The innocent and harmless birds had no chance. The spectacle in reality was revolting, yet lovely ladies in the gorgeous costume of the period looked on with eager and admiring eyes. One reporter told us in the most picturesque manner, how one of the little wounded birds managed to escape and sought in vain protection in a lady's lap, whose delicate silk was stained with its dying blood. This little incident was greeted with silvery laughter, and appeared considerably to have added to the

mirth of the assembled Upper Ten. The truth is such people must have amusement, and if they cannot have it in one way they will in another. Everything is fish that comes to their net. A steeple-chase, a rowing match, the wholesale slaughter of pigeons under circumstances of peculiar atrocity, or even the Wimbledon meeting, at which business is meant, and where there is really nothing for an uninstructed spectator to see, are all alike patronized by them. Newspaper reporters, who are not easily astonished, wonder why on such occasions the butterflies of fashion should be present. They forget how a fashionable existence has a tendency to make life dependent entirely on externals, and that when they fail life is a burden too heavy to be borne. We are too much the creatures of circumstance. The pursuit of pleasure, like all other pursuits when too ardently followed, leads to the exclusion of all other claims. Conscience is hardened, and rarely in the fever of the hour can religion or philanthropy be heard.

Nor does the mischief stop here. Outside the aristocratic gathering, given up to unmanly trifling, or perhaps to sport, like pigeon matches of needless cruelty, are gathered together, in considerable

numbers, carriages and horses, footmen in gorgeous livery, and gay grooms, learning from the coarse and degrading occupations of their masters and mistresses to enjoy their own unrefined amusements with a keener zest. We do not ask what is the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals about. We would be the last to appeal to law for the best of purposes, if those laws were unsupported by national sentiment. In such cases law is powerless. Why we call attention to the subject is, that our readers may realize the distressing fact that in this, the nineteenth century of the Christian era, in this land, as we so fondly dream, of Gospel life and light, our lords and ladies, forgetful of the poverty and ignorance around, can find no better way of killing time. Has the Church no hold on such? Are there no preachers who can arouse such? In these times is it wise in our young aristocrats thus to waste the powers, the privileges, the capacities of life?

As regards the ladies also, on other grounds the subject is important. The *Saturday Review*, in no flattering terms, has drawn the girl of the period as idle, frivolous, false, coarse in language, in de-

meanour, in thought, arrayed in meretricious charms, calculated to win not the regard but only the notice of the most empty-headed of the other sex. The same journalist a little while after returned to his unpleasing task, and gave us a companion picture of the British matron, who commences life by flirting with a duke, and as her years increase and her attractions decrease, then falls so low as to rejoice in the flattery of the son of the grocer who has been so fortunate as to fight his way upward in the social scale. A more odious sketch was never conceived; and really it is something shocking to find woman, when the age of youthful giddiness has long been past, with borrowed complexion and with hair not her own, and in a costume somewhat too liberal of personal display, driving from one scene of fashionable dissipation to another, sustained often by the supply of sal-volatile or opium, of which in her carriage she has a copious store. We remain true to the old idea of woman—the woman of youth and poetry—the woman, after all, the delight and ornament of England's happy homes—

“A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food.”

But the Saturday Reviewer's caricature must have had some foundation in fact. Clearly he was writing of the class to be met with at such places as pigeon-shooting matches, and other aristocratic amusements. The poet tells us mercy finds her dearest seat "in woman's feeble breast." That it was not so at Fulham, for instance, implies that the women there collected, in spite of their graceful carriage, their fashionable demeanour, their aristocratic descent, were but poor things after all. It may be a civilization so luxurious as ours may be productive of such. They are the tares that grow in the same field with the wheat, but they do not represent the womanhood of Christian England, and are, with their attendant cavaliers, the worst foes of a society of which they conceive themselves to be the noblest product and glory. Aristocracy flourishes amongst us and is dear to the English people, because, on the whole, the number of such in its ranks is rare.

CHAPTER III.

THE ALHAMBRA.

SOME few years ago, before people had taken to reading sensational novels, of which the heroines were elegantly-dressed ladies who, golden-haired and with small hands exquisitely gloved, and with ankles similarly enchanting, drove about in the tiniest of broughams, intent on the commission of such trifling little peccadilloes as bigamy, or *crim. con.*, or murder; when the *Penny Magazine* was seen on the bookstalls, when the Society for the Diffusion of Useful and Entertaining Knowledge had not ceased to exist; when Robert Owen was hailed in some quarters as a Messiah,—some good people got it into their heads, how I cannot understand, that the British public was an enlightened and intellectual body, that it was hungering and thirsting for know

ledge, and that its ordinary amusements were scientific and improving. According to them, the aim of each one was to be a Thomas Gradgrind, "with a rule and a pair of scales and the multiplication table in his pocket, sir, ready to weigh and measure any parcel of human nature, and tell you exactly what it comes to." The clerk after his day's work refreshed himself with mathematics, his employer did the same, and if the intelligent artisan really spent his nights at the Pig and Whistle, corrupting his morals and ruining his constitution with nauseous chemical compounds retailed as "Champagne Ale," "Fine Old Tom," "Cream of the Valley," and "Mountain Dew," the real reason was that the learned clubs were full to overflowing. Under the impression, then, that all Britannia's geese had become swans, an enormous building devoted to science for the million was opened in Leicester-square, under the title of the "Panopticon." Outside, with its lofty turrets, it seemed to aim at astronomy; inside, science in general was to be its *forte*; extensive apparatus was prepared, there were lectures on gas, on manufactures, in short, on the circle of the sciences. In every

corner, and the place was full of them, you came across a *savant* or a philosopher ; and in case human nature should sink (the spirit is willing, but the flesh is too often weak), there was relief to be had in the shape of ancient Bath buns and tepid soda water. Somehow or other the thing did not take ; the oracles were dumb, the public regarded them not ; blue-eyed Minerva retreated under a cloud to Basinghall-street, and Science shrieked when the place had to be shut, as, according to the late Thomas Campbell, Freedom did

“ When Kosciusko fell.”

Yet in all London there was not a properer place for proper people. In the programme of the evening there was nothing to offend the most delicate. Your sister, my good sir, might have spent a quiet evening there by herself. Even the swell mob ceased to attend there professionally. The fathers and founders of the Panopticon were in reality in advance of the age ; and they failed, as such public-spirited benefactors invariably do.

A change came. It was not exactly true that “ fools rushed in where angels feared to

tread," but the deserted temple of science was henceforth to be sacred to the cultivation of music. If

"The harp the monarch minstrel swept,
The king of men, the loved of heaven,
Which music hallowed as she wept,
O'er tones her heart of hearts had given,"

was not to be heard there—indeed was no longer audible in the world—at any rate the new gospel taught that music was an art almost divine, and that by means of it a moral millennium might be effected. It was discovered by several eminent writers that we had been working in the dark, that we had utterly mistaken the way to moral elevation, that in short all that the world wanted to set it right was a little music. No wonder, it was argued, you have crime and brutality; look at your amusements for the evening; you provide little more than the glaring gin-palace, or the dingy parlour of the public-house. You drive people into them and keep them sitting there and soaking all night long. Is this the way to rear a virtuous, an intelligent, and a progressive population? Certainly not, was the indignant reply. What is there but music to soothe the heavy-laden soul, to drive from the

aching brow the stamp of care, to light up the lustreless eye, to charm youth into the ways of virtue? Had not the Crystal Palace been originated with a view to the spread of science, and had it not failed, as the Panopticon? Clearly the public were right, and those who sought to provide for its amusement and edification wrong. Music—light, cheerful, invigorating—was all that was wanted; and the novel idea was inaugurated on a grand scale and with no small flourish of trumpets at the Alhambra, as the place had been christened afresh. The press was unanimous in its approval, and the public rallied round the enterprising (I believe spirited is the proper word) manager. However, you may have too much even of music; the mind tires of monotony. Sensational amusements were provided; there were ballets innumerable; there were gymnasts, male and female, wonderful and daring, such as Blondin and Leotard, and others more or less known to fame. All the world flocked to Leicester-square and its halls of dazzling light. I find in 1866-7 the number of visitors to the South Kensington Museum, gratuitous, was 1,402,591; to the Zoological Gardens, with its sixpenny admission on Mondays, was 1,083,563;

and to the Alhambra, where you have to pay heavily if you wish to be comfortable, was 1,555,914! This is a fact of which the manager is naturally proud. Another fact, equally grateful to him, is that it pays 25 per cent.

The Alhambra is now the greatest success in London; it has set the fashion. In many of our large towns there are establishments with a similar name. One of the first places visited by strangers in London is the Alhambra. The building itself externally is a good advertisement. From afar lofty minarets at the corner, the dome in the centre, and the coloured decorations catch the eye; the chief interior feature is the rotunda, formed by tiers of columns and horseshoe-shaped arches supporting the several galleries, the whole crowned by a dome; the decorations are as showy as possible; the stage of course is large; before it is ranged the band, and then you have long rows of seats. A promenade, or what is meant for such, fills up the vacant space. In reality the crowd is too great for any promenading, and the "Young Man of the Period" does little more than find his way from one refreshment bar to another, where as he smokes his cigar

and drinks sherry or pale ale, it is easy to gather from his conversation and the character of his companions, that the attractions he finds there are not of a very refined or elevating character. It is true, as regards the entertainment, no pains or expense have been spared. Yet it is equally true that in the dancing and music and gorgeous scenic representations of the place there is nothing beyond the capacity of the lowest and most sensual assembly. The Alhambra is not a place for a young man to frequent, and the way in which it is patronized by such night after night, is not certainly a favourable sign of the times. Those who pander to the lowest instincts of youth are to be reckoned amongst the worst foes of the community. What is possible to a youth of healthy brain and body and of right principle in this land of ours? The answer is, almost everything. Under favourable conditions youth may realize its most glorious dreams. All good men love to help the young. Youth with its smiling face disarms all envy, soothes all suspicion; with elastic limb it surmounts all obstacles, and with iron nerve it wins the day. Youth is wealth, learning, fame, power—all that men most passionately

prize and seek. He who wastes his youth is a beggar for the rest of his life. Literally he may not wear rags, or live on crusts, or seek the refuge of the streets; he may dress in broadcloth, he may be respectable as the world judges, a marble monument may perpetuate his business qualities and parochial virtues; but what he missed in youth he can never, if he live to the age of Methuselah, attain. Heaven lies about us in our infancy: in our youth there lingers somewhat of its sunshine and blessedness; as Wordsworth says—

“The youth, who daily further from the East
Must travel, still is Nature’s priest,
And by the vision splendid,
Is on his way attended.”

And shame be theirs who rob youth of its glory and its charm; shame to the coward, the slothful, the ignoble soul that sacrifices its youth to the casino and the music-hall, that barter God’s noblest gifts for earth’s veriest dross, its birthright for a mess of pottage. In the Life of the late Sir Thomas Buxton we see the elevating influence of a refined and intelligent family circle. After he had reached manhood Sir Thomas wrote: “I know no

blessing of a temporal nature (and it is not only temporal) for which I ought to render so many thanks as my connexion with the Earlham family. It has given a colour to my life. Its influence was most positive and pregnant with good at that critical period between school and manhood. They were eager for improvement; I caught the infection. I was resolved to please them, and in the college of Dublin, at a distance from all my friends and all control, their influence and the desire to please them kept me hard at my books and sweetened the toil they gave." As husband, as father, as man of the world, as a man of business, as statesman and philanthropist, Sir Thomas was a model. That we have few such now we have to thank or blame such places as the Alhambra. From the youth trained there we can expect no noble God-fearing manhood such as is required by England and the world in time to come.

The principal attractions at the Alhambra are ballet dancing, and such performances as those of Leotard. The flying trapeze, it is said, is not so dangerous as it looks. Nor need it be so, as assuredly it is quite dangerous enough to gratify the most

morbid appetite. It is said Leotard once showed a police committee in Paris that he was prepared for every emergency, and that the entertainment was only licensed after an investigation of the most searching character. Nevertheless, even Leotard was becoming stale and unprofitable, and in order to pander to the vile desire of sensational excitement which seems to be the characteristic of the age, he has had to make his leaps more dangerous. The last time he performed he made the same leaps on two bars that formerly he made on three. This extra risk and labour added vastly to his popularity, and was paid for by an increased rate of remuneration. For his ten minutes' nightly performance, it is said he received the wages of a Lord Chancellor. The manager finds it answer his purpose thus to reward the performer. The greater the danger the greater the excitement and the greater the crowd. When Leotard is announced, the place—it is said to hold from four to five thousand—is crammed to suffocation. Hence we can understand how in Spain the bullfight is a popular institution, how our fathers loved to burn heretics and witches, how Paul fought with beasts at Ephesus, how the cry of

the pagans of Carthage was “Cyprian to the lions ! Cyprian to the wild beasts !” how the Romans, fierce and brutal, filled up the Colosseum while the dying gladiator was butchered to make a Roman holiday, and could see a saintly Perpetua mangled and tortured till the executioner ended her sufferings with his sword—without making a single effort to save her. Depend upon it, the amusements of the present day are not of a refining and humanizing character. There would indeed be a rush to the Alhambra should Leotard essay a more daring flight and break his neck. With what a burst of public applause would a new candidate for Leotard’s notoriety be received !—and should he too meet with a fatal catastrophe, it would be impossible for the Alhambra to contain a tithe of the public eager for admission. As it is, for the shilling you give at the door you scarce get standing room. If you wish to sit down you must pay half-a-crown, and to be comfortable even then you must pay something more, and ascend into the upper regions of splendid menials and haughty beauties, for admission to which poor clerks and fast boys earning scanty salaries vainly sigh. Leotard’s performance begins at 11 and

terminates at ten minutes past. As the doors are open at eight, it is clear there are other attractions. They were, not long since, the performance of a dance forbidden in Paris, a city which we generally fancy to be far more vicious than London, and the ballet, consisting of nearly a couple of hundred young girls, all painted to look, at a distance, as attractive as possible, and wearing the scanty costume patronized by dancers of the opposite sex. People talk of the poetry of the ballet; the truth is, the ballet is attractive as it ceases to be poetical, and appeals to the sensual tendencies of human nature. No one can say, for instance, that the ballet is to be compared, as regards its elevating influences, with the recital of a fine poem or the contemplation of a fine picture. Statuary appeals to the eye; painting appeals to the eye; but the appeal to the eye by a ballet is of a very different and far more voluptuous character. I do not advocate an asceticism which would close the eye to beauty and deprive life of one of its greatest charms. No sensible man would condemn amusement simply because it is such. The world has never done without it—and you may be pretty sure it never will.

Nevertheless I boldly declare the ballet to be unmitigatedly sensual, and to offer young men amusement in its most dangerous and most objectionable form. Scanty costume and liberal display of female development—"ripe and real," as Byron writes, may attract the men, but that is all. Let me fortify this opinion by an authority to whom all will submit who reverence what is great and noble in man. In the Life of Chevalier Bunsen I read: "The ballet he considered a thing of unmixed evil, and its highest and most applauded efforts as the exaggeration of ungracefulness, nor could he refrain from comments of sorrow and anger on the power of fashion which draws the modest and the pure into the multitude of spectators of a different class." The force of this censure is increased when we remember it was not such a ballet as that of the Alhambra the Chevalier condemned, but that of the Italian Opera—the ballet as it was in the days of Taglioni and Cerito—when it was arranged for the delight and edification not of a shilling plebeian mob in Leicester-square, but for the intellectual gratification of the aristocratic leaders of fashion. Of this ballet the Baroness writes, and the words of a refined

and gifted English lady are surely worth consideration, "It is a disgrace to a civilized country that pleasure can be taken in such a spectacle."

Musical performances in the course of the evening from a band of sixty occupy no mean rank among the advertised attractions of the Alhambra. The British public is intensely musical, if we are to judge by the success of music halls. As regards the Alhambra, I much doubt, however, whether any one cares about the music. It is almost drowned in the noise of the promenading and predominating patrons of the place, male or female, who are more inclined to lounge about the many little bars with which the sides of the interior are filled, and "liquor up," than to be regaled with music, however skilful in execution or entrancing in effect.

Clearly the Alhambra is no place for the Christian youth of this country—the class whom the *Daily Telegraph* playfully denominates as "goody goodies." Nor is it a place of which a man of the world who wishes his son to get on in life, would wish to see him a regular frequenter. To many it has been undoubtedly the road to ruin. It has led them into bad habits—it has introduced them to bad com-

panions—it has prepared for them, as many a father or master knows well, as the revelations of our police-offices and police-courts can abundantly testify, a bad end. Few young men in the middle ranks of life have salaries such as permit of frequent visits to the Alhambra, where they are tempted into expenses in every way. It may be gratifying to certain silly lads to drink with prize-fighters, to be condescendingly noticed by liveried flunkies, to be hail fellow well met with betting men, to be on intimate terms with showy females, decidedly more pecuniary than romantic, but it is not a pleasure within every one's means. The "swell" spends a good deal of money here in the course of the evening, but he can afford it; unfortunately the clerk who apes him cannot. People wonder why the young man of the period does not marry—why he never has a half-penny to spare—why he never makes his mother a present, or takes his sisters anywhere, or spends his evenings at home—why, in short, he leads a selfish, but what the world calls a highly respectable, existence. The answer is found in the existence and prosperity of the Alhambra, which is

the fashionable rendezvous of the fast youth of the metropolis and their female acquaintances. The genus is far too common ; you can detect it at once by its short coat, its defiantly outrageous hat, its “ horsey ” legs, the rudeness of its talk and its frivolous character. The least instructed and rudest peasant lad, doing his duty in his humble way, is a more honourable being than he who thus wastes his golden hours. In the long run dishonesty is the result of such a life. While I write a clerk is charged at Marlborough-street police-office with having obtained charitable contributions by false and fraudulent pretences. In answer to the charge the prisoner said he had formerly been a clerk in the City, but had lost his character through attending races. At the Alhambra there are many such lost characters. The chances are that there they acquire the expensive tastes which they seek to gratify by betting and attending races.

You can scarce wonder that the Alhambra is full. It is beautifully fitted up and admirably arranged ; the aspect of the place is light and cheerful ; on the stage you may see often as gorgeous spectacles as in a theatre ; and then there is something pleasant

in the sight of an immense crowd enjoying itself. It was long conducted by a clever writer, whose influence secured the praise of the London press. No wonder the Alhambra became popular and flourishes. In a theatre you are, as it were, under restraint ; here you may move about or attempt to do so, and talk, and laugh, and smoke *ad libitum*. Men about town come here for that purpose. There are few heads of families and still fewer respectable women ; certainly it is not the place for them. It exists for other purposes ; it is the resort of women who have to live by their charms of person rather than of mind or manners—whose greatest virtues are that they affect none ; and whose general style of conversation is not of a character such as Mrs. Ellis would like to hear from “the Women of England.” The courtesan of to-day—it is worse than folly to call her Lais or Aspasia—affects no privacy, is by no means squeamish as to her vocation, seeks display rather than avoids it, and flourishes best in the glare of gas. The girl of the period, it is to be feared, talks far too much slang ; affects a manner not occasionally a little too fast ; in her innocence assumes wicked ways, which she mistakenly fancies

to be winning ones. A visit to the Alhambra would teach her this, that in that line she has no chance of successful rivalry—that she is quite unprepared for it—that in the race virtue and vice do not start fair—that the fallen one, tricked out with meretricious art, made brazen by gin to-night and champagne to-morrow, depending for supper on the gent by her side, possibly houseless if she fail to flatter, and cajole, and attract, is a fitter mate for fools than herself. There should be no mistake in this matter—the law of life is everywhere, everything after its kind. Further, let it be understood that here we are in a market-place and Royal Exchange of Vice—that here come night after night those who have it to sell and those who want to buy—that it is the lounge, the bazaar, the court of those who

“Their friends and nature have forgot,
To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.”

I have heard of gentlemen from the country who have taken their wives with them, under a misapprehension as to the real character of the place, and who have had to leave it precipitately, but not till they had been put to much annoyance from the tone of

the surrounding conversation ; but a raw lad might not be so nice, especially after reading the encomiums of the press. The chances are he will repeat his visit, under the impression that he is, in his own especial slang, learning a thing or two, and seeing life. The press talks of the respectability of the Alhambra. In this respectability lies its chief power of mischief. With its air of gaiety and comfort, with its pomp and magnificence, with its singing men and dancing women, with its swarms of sinners and courtesans, all well dressed and merry, with its mirth and music, it is a fearful snare to the young and weak, and the thousands of homeless lads of whom London drains the country. If it stood in a slum, if the interior were dark and dingy, if the scenes were disgusting and brutal, if it were haunted by bullies, if the spectators were the seedy and unwashed, if the soiled dove came there minus her flowing robe and tinted cheek, if the visitor came in contact with naked vice, it could do but little harm.

Drunkenness has ceased to be the vice of the upper and middle classes, and there is but little, if any of it in the Alhambra. No doubt there, as at

most places, people drink more than is good for them. In a place heated by gas and crowded with people, there is always an excuse for the glass, and you are sure to be requested by some free and easy nymph or other to treat her to something to drink. The bars, presided over by imitation houris, according to the fashion first introduced into this country by Messrs. Spiers and Pond, are well patronized, but so dense is the crowd that a drunken man is a nuisance ; in the interests of the proprietors he is excluded, and he who wishes to get fuddled must go elsewhere. "Thirsty souls" are there in abundance, and there is ample provision made for their liquorish propensities. Indeed, they are taxed so heavily, that the refreshment department is often the sheet anchor or mainstay of such places ; but the drinking is kept within bounds, as an intoxicated fool destroys not merely his own pleasure but that of all around. There is little of tipsy jollity in our days. Life as we have it now, on the turf or on 'Change, has a tendency to make men somewhat too wide awake. Men are sober that they may sin more, not less : one might almost say, if the *Daily Telegraph* had not said it so often that

people have got sick of hearing it—"The English take their pleasures sadly."

Perhaps the most objectionable feature of the place is the "Canteen," into which it is not very difficult to gain admission. The "Canteen" is an underground cellar, with a refreshment bar, and benches and tables of the plainest and rudest description. Looking through a dense haze of tobacco-smoke you will see some forty or fifty ballet-girls standing chatting or seated in company with their male admirers. A ballet-girl need not be an objectionable character. In spite of her paint—too thick to be pleasant when near, or of her defective grammar, or of her scanty petticoat—she may be an industrious, respectable member of society. It is clear she has to work hard in her profession; nevertheless, such a place as the canteen is not a desirable adjunct to an entertainment open to censure on other considerations. In daytime the ballet-girl is by no means attractive; you would pass her in the street without a second glance. As a rule, the difference between her and other girls of the same rank in life, is that she looks a little more shabby, and that her clothes are a trifle dirtier;

but in the Canteen she appears in her conventional dress as she is displayed upon the stage, with flashing eye and beauteous form. If she is virtuous she cannot long be expected to remain so, as long as the "Canteen" is opened for the convenience of herself and her male admirers, who of course are only too happy to be able to indulge in the amusement of smoking and drinking under such peculiar circumstances. No wonder that the girls are bold and brazen, intent chiefly on a liberal display of personal charms, to which distance lends enchantment and for which art has done much. As a rule, their language is as coarse as their appearance, but there are those to whom the fact of a girl belonging to the ballet renders her additionally attractive; to such the long dingy "Canteen," with its bare boards and benches and whitewashed walls is a great attraction.

Old Sam Johnson was a wiser man than some now-a-days. He was the friend of Garrick; he had access to the green-room, where the actors and actresses are often not only the cause of wit in others but witty in themselves; he was of a rough, strong nature, and found it was

wiser to avoid temptation than to listen to it and succumb. When asked by Garrick why he had ceased to frequent the green-room, his answer was, "I'll come no more behind your scenes, David, for the silk stockings and white bosoms of your actresses excite my amorous propensities." In our day Dr. Johnson would have to avoid good society altogether; but in his ruder and more virtuous times it was in the green-room that he found a temptation and snare. I admire him, that he could honestly tell his danger, and that he was not ashamed to confess it. I don't fancy the fast youths you see in the Canteen flocking round ballet-girls, will do as the Doctor did. They are not, nor ever will be, Dr. Johnsons; they have neither his learning, nor industry, nor brains. What the Doctor would have shunned, they seek—in their weakness they are unconscious of it. They take it rather for strength, and pride themselves on the follies for which it is idle to plead—the hot blood of youth. There is no need to true development that manhood should be reached by a deteriorating process—that youth, with its energy and power and promise, should stoop to rise—that to

attain to the serene heights of virtue we must first wallow in the slough of vice. If in this I am wrong—if the reverse be the case—then it is to be hoped that the Alhambra may flourish in all time to come.

Independently, however, of all moral considerations, it is really sad to see the way in which such a place as the Alhambra, originated with a view to providing the public with healthier and more rational amusements, succeeds, because it attempts nothing of the kind. Volumes might be written on this head. The fund the nation can devote to pleasure is necessarily limited; and if the lower forms flourish it must be at the expense of those which are higher and better. In London there is scarcely a place in which a couple of friends or strangers can spend a pleasant evening, unless they go to the theatre or the music-hall. If a visitor merely wishes for a cup of coffee and a cigar and a newspaper or magazine, or a little chat, he cannot have them unless he enters some public-house. In this respect there is not such another capital so deficient as London. For some who go to the Alhambra it may be urged they have nowhere else to go. The Great Globe has been dissolved—the Colosseum

is cleared away and sold off as old rubbish—the Adelaide Gallery has long been closed. What was a national hall in Holborn for political lectures, and discussions, and popular gatherings, is now a music-hall. An attempt was made to form an educational association in Charing Cross, where, by means of a library and cheap lectures, the people could be improved and instructed and amused, but the attempt did not succeed; dancing, drinking, theatrical representations,—most of them adaptations from the French,—and music, are the only pleasures for which a London population care. Even as in the old Hebrew days, Wisdom lifts up her voice in our streets, and no man regards her testimony.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MODERN THEATRE.

NO one can have walked the streets of the metropolis, or have read the advertising columns of the daily press, without having come to the conclusion that the taste for theatrical amusements has been developed amongst us to an unprecedented extent. St. Martin's Hall has been turned into a theatre, St. George's Hall has met with a similar fate. In the Strand, in the costly building in which warbled nightly "the inimitable Vance," the comic singer with whom the Prince of Wales is said to have shaken hands, the ballet now finds especially a home ; and even in what we were wont to call dull and decorous Holborn a couple of theatres are conspicuous rivals to Moses and Son's ready-made clothes establishment or Day and Martin's far-famed blacking dépôt. In London there are no

less than thirty-three theatres, chiefly devoted to comedy and melodrama more or less refined. If the theatrical view of life be the correct one, the condition of Londoners is greatly to be envied. The theatre, we are told, is a school for morals, and one of its principal merits is that it holds up to ridicule the follies and vices of the age. People who do not patronize the theatre are slow, old-fashioned, sour, Puritanical, behind the times—sad souls only fit to be inhabited by

“loathed melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest midnight born.”

Well, those against whom the reproach was directed were quite willing to bear it. Enough for most of us is life with its real joys and sorrows. Many hoped against hope that in our time the stage had become what its patrons asserted, and that the increasing crowds nightly attracted thither, at any rate indulged in little other than harmless mirth. From the press there was a unanimous chorus of praise as each public-spirited manager endeavoured to outvie the other in the extravagance of his burlesque, in the smartness of his latest adaptation from the French, in the splendour of his spectacular

effects. In the letter of the Lord Chamberlain we had a sudden revelation of a theatrical state of affairs of a very different character. Managers, the press, and the pleasure-seeking public, were alike condemned. The *Pall Mall Gazette* had, in many indignant articles, protested against the indecency of the theatre, and now Lord Sydney writes that he has learned with much regret that “there is much reason to complain of the impropriety of costume of the ladies in the pantomimes, burlesques, &c., which are now being performed in the metropolitan theatres,” and that “he has noticed for some time that this evil has been gradually on the increase.” He intimates that the state of things complained of threatens to become “a public scandal,” and states, as an undoubted fact, that “many who have hitherto frequented the theatres,” now are unwilling “to permit the ladies of their families to sanction, by their presence, such questionable exhibitions.” Can we desire a better corroboration of the truth of Puritanical denunciations—or can we find more emphatic testimony as to the low character of the stage, and of the public that support it? The language we

quote is not that of an enemy of the drama, but of one who wishes to see it patronized by all classes of the community at large. It is reluctantly that he has come forward to condemn. The truth is, the evil of which he complains had become unbearable. If we are trying to purify the Haymarket, if the *posé plastique* is put down, if the infamous Judge and Jury Club is modified, if the abominations of Holywell-street exist no more, still less can it be permitted that fashionable vice should mainly usurp the boxes of the theatres, and indecency and indecorum shamelessly run riot on the stage. Of course the excuse of the manager is that he must live. His doors are open to all who pay, and as theatres multiply so he must increase the attractions he has to offer. In reality, the excuse is worthless. Mr. Charles Kean was a man of exemplary moral character, and he sternly set his face against the licentiousness of the stage. Mr. Macready was yet more exemplary and stern, and both of them were more or less pecuniarily successful. Amongst the reminiscences of our youth is that of a respectable clergyman who saw much of Mrs. Siddons while staying in a small bathing village on the

east coast; and many and deeply interesting were their conversations on religious subjects.

People ask, Where are such actresses as Mrs. Siddons? Where are the successors of the Keans and Garricks of an earlier day? It seems in the modern theatre there is no room for them, as they could not condescend to the absurdities which tickle the populace. It is in the low taste of the audience we must seek the degradation and indelicacy of the stage. Actually the *Times* insinuated that the Lord Chamberlain's letter was aimed at the dress circle rather than at the stage—at their patrons rather than at the actors. Our French critics are of a similar opinion. M. Theodore Grave, in the *Figaro*, regards the letter of the Lord Chamberlain as a capital joke, and adds his opinion that, from his knowledge of the English character, it will be so considered in England. "I do not believe," he says, "as a rule in the sincerity of such protestations as these; but for a man who, like myself, knows the English character thoroughly, it is impossible to see in it anything more than a fantastic eccentric movement—the product of that old leaven of humoristic wit which belongs almost always to the

fellow-countrymen of the celebrated Swift." England, instances our author, is the only country in the world in which a man is permitted to bathe in public stark naked. At the seaside in England he has seen the British Triton in a state of absolute nudity, and at ten yards' distance fair young girls, with chaste brows and with the bearing of Mignon, talking and looking on without seeming in the least disconcerted. He is of opinion then, that as long as an actor takes care in appearing on the English stage to wear, at least a pair of bathing-drawers, there will be no danger of shocking the modesty of the gentlemen, or even of the ladies, in the audience department. As to the French origin of the indecency which is said to have invaded the English stage, he calls the attention of the Lord Chamberlain to the fact that this invasion was aided and encouraged by the English aristocracy. This becomes clearer when we remember that one manager publicly denied that there was any indecency in his theatre, as it was patronized exclusively by working men! That the drama has declined from an intellectual point of view is admitted by its warmest friends. Mr. Boucicault testifies to its

want of originality. Mrs. Stirling, one of the few charming actresses who grace the stage, says more. At the last annual dinner of the Dramatic, Equestrian, and Musical Sick Fund Association, in commenting upon the Lord Chamberlain's letter, she remarked, "I don't think scanty petticoats would be my text. I only wish the plays we have to act were always as satisfactory as the dresses they are acted in, and that the worst offences against good taste on the stage were to be looked for in the costume of the *corps de ballet*. I should first suggest to managers to cater for the higher instead of the lower grade of the public, and to see whether there is not a large class that might be drawn to the theatre by a better style of entertainment. To some authors I would say, if we are to have burlesque let it be of the humour that we remember of old, and be made up of better materials than nigger melodies, break-downs, and overdrawn puns. I would advise the more serious dramatist to be realistic in higher matters than Hansom cabs and practical pumps, and to give us characters and incidents as like the truth as the painted scenes before which they are played." We fear Mrs. Stirling's

suggestions are too late. Amongst writers for the stage where, we ask, are the successors, not of Shakspeare, but of Douglas Jerrold, of Sheridan Knowles, of Justice Talfourd, of Lord Lytton, and Leigh Hunt? For the wit and poetry of the past we have now indelicate allusion and wretched puns. The eye is aimed at rather than the head. Burlesque and gorgeous show are now the order of the day. The taste of the most vulgar is appealed to—as it is now only the vulgar, rich or poor, who support the stage. Instead of the performer elevating the audience, the latter drag him down to their own low level. The manager takes care only to produce what will please his patrons, and what they require is no noble lesson of morals, but a sensational admixture of buffoonery, indecency, and farce. In this respect no continental city can vie with us, and even the gay capital of France has something to learn. Last season the attraction of the theatre *par excellence* was a French actress, celebrated for her personal charms and the questionable use she made of them. In London she was quite the rage, as she had previously been in Paris, but here we are told her

acting was ten times more outrageous than there. Fools grin and pay, and so the stage goes on from bad to worse. Sensible men keep away, and therefore their influence is null. As the theatrical critic is generally a theatrical writer, his aim is chiefly to keep on good terms with the manager rather than indignantly to remonstrate where decency is violated and the morals of the community endangered. Nor do the managers labour in vain. This pantomime season, it is said, the receipts at Covent Garden and Drury Lane were as much as 3000*l.* per week.

As a friend of the drama the Lord Chamberlain has done well in warning managers that the time has come for theatrical reform. Still, we anticipate but little good from his well-meant efforts. The truth is, the day of the drama has past. It has long ceased to attract the intellectual portion of the community. The drama flourished in an ignorant age, when it roused the sluggish heart and stimulated the torpid intellect, and taught the audience something of the history of the world, something of the poetry, and pathos, and passion that was hidden in humanity. But that day is not ours,

when the printing press has unlocked for man all the treasures of the past, and when Knowledge, rich with the spoils of time, unfolds her ample page to the meanest and lowest in the land. In life as it is, we can find tragedy and comedy better than any actor can represent them on the stage. The circulating library, the lecture, the penny press have killed the drama, and for the vicious, and the weak and volatile, for whom managers have now to cater, there is nothing but the dregs. In this land of freedom and energy and unbounded aspirations, commerce, politics, law, literature, science, art, adventure, absorb all hardy and active intellects. For such the theatre has few attractions ; they can find greater and more congenial and more varied excitement outside. The stage depends in consequence now mainly on the skill of the scene-painter, who comes on for his share of laudation as regularly as the dramatist, and on the ballet. I see the Duke of Coburg has suppressed the latter in his own dominions, and the German press is praising his example, and asking others to do the same. In London, if his example is followed, the doors of the theatres will have to be closed, as the few good

actors and good acting plays now in possession of the stage will fail to draw to any extent commensurate with managerial expenses. It may be it would be a better sign of the times were such the case, but here I have to speak of facts, facts confessed by all, and patent to every observer. It is no new theme, that of the demoralizing influence of the stage. "Ovid," as Gibbon points out, "employs two hundred lines in the research of places the most favourable to love. Above all, he considers the theatre as the best adapted to collect the beauties of Rome, and to melt them into tenderness and sensuality."

Julian the Apostate, as the ecclesiastical historians call him, permitted no pagan priest to frequent the tavern or the theatre.

CHAPTER V.

THE CASINO AND THE ARGYLE.

PERHAPS the two greatest abominations of London at the present day are such respectable places, licensed according to Act of Parliament, as the Casino, now known as the National Assembly Rooms, and the Argyle. In the low purlieus of the East, where the publican fits up a room for dancing and drinking, where foul women congregate, where it would not be safe for a gentleman to appear, unless disguised, you see the most loathsome of vice in its most repulsive form, as it is in the worst parts of Liverpool or Cardiff, as it is in the San Straat of Rotterdam, as it is in the Hering-street of Antwerp, as it is in that part of Hamburg which lies outside the gate, stretching towards Altona, as it is, it is to be feared, all the world over, where the sailor, whatever be his nationality, celebrates his safe arrival at port, after

he has been preserved from the perils of the seas. To decent people there is nothing attractive in such places. Indeed, with all their surroundings, they may be simply described as in every way disgusting, whether you regard the people who frequent them, or the kind of amusement carried on. Misanthropists tell you that the world is divided into rogues and dupes. As regards these haunts of dissipation the classification is undoubtedly correct. Jack ashore, led away by his animal spirits, under the influence of drink, with cash in his pocket, is the dupe, even if the kind Samaritan rescues him and carries him off to some well-conducted Sailors' Home; and the crew around, male and female, obese, lewd, cunning, filthy, are undeniably rogues. Sometimes they are more. In the long rooms, under the flaming gas, while the musicians are fiddling, and the mirth, such as it is, most furious, and the women dancing, and Jack is smoking, all at once there is a whirlwind of drunken passion; girls scream, men swear, blows are struck, on the white muslin of the harlot there is a dash of blood redder than the carmine on her painted cheek. It may be you catch the flash of bright steel, bearing

with it sharp and sudden death. In the more civilized West of which I write there are no such displays of vulgar passion. There aristocratic non-chalance is considered the thing. The predominant feeling seems to be that life is a bore. No one is sooner used up than your man on town. Byron wrote—

“Worse than adversity the Childe befell;
He felt the fulness of satiety;
Then loathed he in his native land to dwell”—

and of the man of pleasure something similar may be said. At any rate such is the impression intended to be conveyed. All is quiet and orderly, and seemingly respectable. The women take their tone from the men, who have found all to be vanity and vexation of spirit. If you doubt my word, come and judge for yourself; like the London tavern, the doors of these temples of pleasure are open to all.

Any night in the week about ten, if we take our stand in Holborn or the Haymarket, we shall see cabs and broughams setting down their occupants at the doors—not of a theatre, or a public-house, or a supper-room, but of what is known as an assembly-

room. Well-dressed pedestrians are making their way thither. We pay a shilling and enter. On the ground floor there is a space reserved for dancing. Above are galleries with velvet benches for loungers, and at one end is the band. All the fittings-up of the place are expensive. Gas and gilding and plate-glass lighten up the atmosphere. Most obsequious waiters bring you anything in the way of refreshment you require, and there are tables at which you will see ladies, if you judge by dress alone, and gentlemen, seated drinking wine, or chatting, or watching the mazy evolutions of the dance, conducted under the guidance of the master of the ceremonies. As if to give the affair the sanction of the government and the magistrates, the avenues are guarded by a policeman, who must here have opportunities of becoming familiar with features which he may have occasion possibly to recognise in another locality and under very different circumstances. People who come to London are astonished at the existence of such places. Our latest critic, the author of *English Photographs*, writes :—
“A few silly people are sometimes to be seen dancing in these rooms; but the object of their

existence is to afford a rendezvous for the courtesans of London and their admirers, who flock there every evening from ten o'clock till twelve. Yet these places are regularly licensed, and policemen, who know every woman in the rooms to be a courtesan and a vagrant, are stationed there to protect the premises and the proprietors." Our critic is correct. In such a place as this you will see the leading women of loose life—the girls who were brought up as maids-of-all-work, or dress-makers, or to serve at the bar of a public-house—and who find a vicious career to be more lucrative; to enable them to dress in finer clothes, and to associate with a richer class of men than if they did as good people told them, and remained virtuous. Here also are to be seen those who have never fallen—who never had any virtue to lose—whose earliest associations were vicious, and to whom impurity came with the first drop of their mother's milk. In London and in all great towns there are many such. Work is abhorrent to their nature—they are ashamed to beg—they have no wish to enter a reformatory, to have their hair shorn close, and their fine silk dresses exchanged for cotton ones—to lead a tedious and

proper life—and they come here ; and as long as their good looks last they are all regarded, in a worldly point of view, better off than many. They ride about in broughams ; they have fashionable dresses ; they have hoards of jewels, chiefly, however, at the pawnbroker's ; they banquet on sumptuous fare ; they become the companions of men often of high social position and great wealth. Some of them have a tact and a power of deception that a Talleyrand might have envied ; the little lordling, the country squire, the muscular captain, or soft banker's or brewer's son whom they enslave in their toils—is no match for them. They can make him believe anything when they are hard up, and their creditors are clamorous for cash ; close, selfish, worldly-wise, suspicious as he is in his intercourse with his equals or inferiors, in the hands of a woman of this class he is the easiest of dupes. She will vow and protest, and sob and caress, and he, though he knows such women are false by habit and nature—that their love of intrigue is so great that they cannot remain faithful to any man—that the promises they make one moment they will break the next—believes that in his case there is an ex-

ception to a universal law, and that he may believe

“A woman and an epitaph,
Or any other thing that’s false.”

In such a place as this you get a good idea of the wealth and luxury of our age. It is difficult of course to estimate what London spends in dissipation, that is, in what the political economists tell us is unprofitable expenditure. Clearly it is very large. Such places as the Argyle and the Casino denote the existence of great wealth as well as great viciousness, and show that it is quite as necessary to Christianize the middle and upper ranks of life as the British workman, who is rather in our time in danger of being overdone with good advice. The question may here be asked whether in our great schools we get a real, faithful discharge of duty. If schoolmasters at Eton and Harrow and Westminster, looked more after the morals of their pupils, should we not have plainer living and higher thinking, fewer muscular Christians perhaps, better scholars and worse cricketers? As it is, the lad seems educated down to the lowest level of London life, and naturally seeks the doubtful society of these

public dancing-rooms. Amongst the crowd here of spectators may be found many of the sons of our wealthy merchants, many of the scions of an aristocracy that was called into existence and that has maintained its fame by successes on honourable fields. Little is to be hoped or expected from the youth you meet here—many of them undoubtedly sent to the metropolis for professional advancement or study by fathers and mothers far away, who little dream that the son to advance whom in life such heavy pecuniary sacrifices have to be made is thus wasting their substance in riotous living, thus letting golden opportunity slip by, thus heaping up for himself sorrow and regret, and despair and shame. It is worse than worldly failure or degradation which forms the inheritance of the men or lads who come in search of pleasure here. A youth may do worse even than waste his substance in riotous living. An industrious life may partly compensate for a wasted youth. Fortune may smile upon the man, and he may repair eventually much of the debt he owes to his parents in the future, or he may atone by social decorum for social indecorum of hotter and earlier years. But the mischief of these

places is of a character which follows and darkens the transgressor all his subsequent life. Never can the sinner get rid of the sense of sin ; never can the man who has fallen wear the joyous front of innocence. No art can replace the bloom of the peach when it is once rudely rubbed away. On this point it is unnecessary to expatiate. There have been many higher moralists than Burns ; yet one verse of his will render further comment unnecessary. Take down his Epistle to a Young Friend. Let us hear what he says :—

“I waive the quantum o’ the sin,
The hazard of concealing;
But och ! it hardens a’ within,
And petrifies the feeling.”

People are complaining of the low tone of feeling in this country, of the way in which ladies dress in public or in private, of the indecency which is sanctioned in the theatre, of the demoralizing character of much of the literature of fashionable fiction, of the outrageous predominance of the *demi-monde* in the Parks, of the absence now-a-days in fashionable life of good old-fashioned domestic virtues, of the vul-

gar display of wealth, and of the questionable way in which, in these days, wealth is too often won. Can it be otherwise when you see in these dancing-rooms and in such places as the Alhambra young men by hundreds and thousands, and remember that it is from the painted and dressed-out women seen here they choose their confidantes and friends? In the Holborn Casino, for instance, you may see often, if not nightly, a fair-haired girl blazing with diamonds and pearls, who but yesterday was to have married the scion of an illustrious house. Actually the silly lad and this woman were at the church fixed on for the bridal ceremony; the clergyman was present; in another moment they would have been man and wife, had not the father of the boy or some one sent by him arrived just in time to stop the proceedings and to save the honour of an ancient name. This "somebody" in question is rather notorious in London just now. In any respectable shop in the Strand or Regent-street you may see her photograph exhibited side by side with those of eminent statesmen, high Church dignitaries, distinguished officers in the army and navy, and

members of the Royal Family. It is said she is paid handsomely to come here by the proprietor. More than one young man with more money than brains has found her rather a costly acquaintance. She may yet possibly be a lady of title. From such places as the Casino and the Argyle have not merely rich men taken wives, but the peerage has recruited its ranks. When such things are done, the community suffers, the moral tone of the nation is lowered; fallen women put on a bolder face, and think less and less of the dark flowing river into which so many of them plunge on the bleak winter nights, or of the hospital in which more of them so sadly die, and more of the worldly splendour which, to the shame of the country be it written, some of them achieve. That they do this is chiefly due to the sphere of display provided for them in the Casino and the Argyle. There they are petted, while in the Haymarket they are ignominiously dragged up before Mr. Knox—a magistrate who, if he had his way, would clear the metropolis of the attractions most dangerous and alluring to silly men.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BAL MASQUE

IN foreign lands, we are told, is something refined and delicate. I have been to some abroad which certainly were nothing of the kind: but in England, or rather in London, they are low, black-guard assemblies, whether in the Holborn Casino, or Covent-garden—whether at the Alhambra, or Highbury Barn, or at Drury-lane. In 1723 they were put down by Government. Steele wrote of them, that in his time “the misfortune of the thing is, that people dress themselves in what they have a mind to be—and not what they are fit for.” George III. did not approve of an amusement, says Cornelia Knight, which he thought might lead to much that was wrong. I have seen the French men and women at Vauxhall, and if they do in Paris what they did there—why, then I doubt somewhat of the

superiority even of French bal masqués. But in England a public bal masqué is a disgusting exhibition, to enjoy which every moral sense must be deadened, and then a man must be drunk and have his pockets well lined. The rustic flower-girls and simple hay-makers with whom you dance will drink champagne as if it were ginger-beer, and consume all the delicacies of the season as if they cost no more than bacon and beans.

The fun, as it is termed, generally commences about 11 P.M., by an immense mob of costermongers, tag-rag and bob-tail, forming themselves in a row under the *surveillance* of the police, to watch and criticise the appearance of the maskers, and specially to regale themselves with jokes should any unfortunate do the economical and arrive on foot. I hear people say they like London—they can do anything they like without being observed. I doubt that much. I advise the strong-minded female who tells me that, to walk down Cheapside in a Bloomer costume, and I will warrant she will have as great a mob accompanying her as followed Kossuth or any other hero to Guildhall. But to return to the bal masqué. I presume the company

are arriving, and the little boys are cheering, as only little boys can, right under cab wheels and in between the horses' legs. Some of the company, to borrow an ancient witticism, go disguised as gentlemen—some buy a mask at the door for fourpence—others delight in monstrous noses and fearful moustache—others, especially those who have fancy dresses, appear as Charles II.'s, Cardinal Wolseys, Shakspeares, Henry VIII.'s, Scotch Highlanders, Australian diggers, Monks, and look far better when they enter than they do when they make their exit in the early light of a summer morning. The same remark holds true to their female companions, who are mostly the same ladies that you meet in Regent-street in the evening, or hanging about the Haymarket all night, a class at no time remarkable for modesty, but whom we shall see in the course of the evening becoming bold and brazen-faced with excitement and wine. But the theatre is full—the guests are met—the band is assembled—the leader wields the baton—the sparkling chandeliers give a lustre to the scene, and away they bound to the music, whilst from the boxes and the gallery admiring crowds look down. Yes, there is

a wild excitement in the hour, which stirs even the pulses of old blood. The women as débardeurs, flower girls, sailor boys—many of them with faces fitting them for diviner lives, look beautiful even in their degradation and shame. Horace tells us, wherever we go black care gets up and rides behind. Is it so? Can there be sad hearts beneath those gay exteriors? Do those cheeks flushed and radiant eyes indicate that they belong to those whom all moralists have held infamous, all religions condemned, and whose existence our modern civilization perpetuates and deplores? Is man an immortal being, sent here for a while to triumph over fleshly lusts and passions, to learn to trample as dross on the vanities of earth, and to set his affections on things above? Is it true that the most successful votaries of pleasure, from kingly Solomon to lordly Byron, have borne the same testimony to them, that they are not worth the gathering, that they are but as apples gathered by the shore of the Dead Sea, fair to the eye but deadly to the taste, and that in no way can they answer the need and aspirations of the heart of man, which is greater and grander than them all? Have we paid ministers

of religion, archbishops and bishops, millions and millions of pounds to teach men these few self-evident truths, and yet do such orgies as those of which we write not merely exist but flourish, as if we had accepted the creed of the atheist,—“ Let us eat and drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die?” To-morrow ! who around us now thinks of to-morrow ? Not the young rake chaffing and dancing before us, whose mirth is the delirium of forgetfulness and the intoxication of wine, whose to-morrow is Whitecross-street prison or the Spunging House. Not that brazen-faced woman now arrayed in splendour, and surrounded by her admirers, whose to-morrow is old age, neglect, and a garret. Not those grey-headed gouty old sinners in the boxes, who have not the excuse of youth for the follies with which they desecrate old age. And certainly not that pale clerk, who has most probably embezzled his employer’s money, and who is frantically exclaiming, “ Waiter, another bottle of champagne,” as he tells the women of his lot that he feels “ a cup too low.” You say he has them to cheer him. Yes, till his money is gone. When he is at Bow-

street, as assuredly he will soon be, I promise you they will not be the last to give evidence as to his possession of funds, or the manner of his spending them. There may be honour among thieves ; there is none among women when they have once lost their own.

Still gaily goes on the dancing. Then there is supper and wine—and more dancing, and more music, and more wine. The reporters for the papers generally leave about supper-time and state that the gaieties were prolonged till a late hour ; it is well they do this. In the earlier part of the evening the rioting and chaffing is somewhat of the coarsest, and the wit somewhat of the poorest ; and the later it grows, and the more potent is the vinous influence, the less select, or rather the more obscene, is the phraseology. In the wild saturnalia that ensues, all the restraints of decency and habit are thrown on one side. It is time to close, and the conductor sees this. Already Henry VIII. is right royally drunk, and Cardinal Wolsey is uttering flat blasphemy, and one monk has got a black eye, another a bloody nose. Unless, as in the case of Covent-garden, the theatre is burned down, and

the proceedings are abruptly terminated, there is a final dance,—a patriotic rendering of the national anthem,—and into the air walk, or rather tumble, the debauchees, some to go home quietly to bed, others to keep it up in the nearest coffee-houses and public-houses; and handmaidens rising early to take in the milk in various parts of the metropolis are astonished by the exceedingly unsteady gait and singular costumes of various dismal gents, who have, if they are not absolute fools, sworn that it will be a long time before they go to another bal masqué. Such, I believe, is the general conclusion, the only exceptions being the costumier who provides the dresses, generally a Jew, and the bigger Jew who furnishes the wine.

CHAPTER VII.

JUDGE AND JURY CLUBS.

THIS is a comic age in which we live. We are overdone with burlesque and funny writers. The ghastliest attempts at liveliness surround us on every side. I would not bring back the grave deportment and stately etiquette of days gone by, nor could I if I would. But are we not running to another extreme? Is there not a lack of reverence and dignity? If we train up our youth to comic Blackstones, and teach them to extract fun out of the grandest history done in modern Europe—the history of the Anglo-Saxon race—of the race that has founded civil and religious liberty, and still nurses it in the face of a frowning continent, what can we expect? Men are what we make them. “Just as the twig is bent the tree’s inclined.” A feeble and contemptible father is

succeeded by a feeble and contemptible son. Have no grand creed of your own to make your daily path lustrous with the light of heaven. Crack your weak jest and pun at all men have revered. Learn to titter and to sneer, no matter the theme. And can you wonder that your son believes not in man's honour or woman's love—in God or the devil, but solely in the Holborn Casino and Cremorne? For instance, is not law one of the most wonderful achievements of civilization? I do not go so far as “the judicious Hooker.” I do not say with him that her seat is the throne of God, her voice the harmony of the universe; but is it not wonderful to think of the complex arrangements of which the judge, seated in his robes on the bench, administering law, is the outward sign? In the first place, man must have learnt to give up a primary instinct of his nature—that of self-revenge. Then the central power in the darkest parts of the land must have become dominant. What ages must have past before law dared meddle with privilege, or before its administrators could realize the fact of the sanctity of the individual man, whether he starved in a garret or feasted in a palace! And when the

judges went on circuit, with the gorgeous cavalcade of the olden time, what terror was struck into the hearts of the rustics, and how patent became to them the strength and dignity of law. Now why burlesque this? The idea is good and true, yet the burlesque is permitted and exists, aye, even to this day, in spite of Mr. Knox, who only wars with its indecency.

Till a couple of months ago it is years since I was at a Judge and Jury Club, but from what I then heard I believe their character is in no degree changed. The old original one met in an hotel not far from Covent-garden, and was presided over by a man famous in his day for his power of *double entendre*. About nine o'clock in the evening, if you went upstairs you would find a large room with benches capable of accommodating, I should think, a hundred or a hundred and fifty persons. This room was generally well filled, and by their appearance the audience was one you would call respectable. The entrance fee entitled you to refreshment, and that refreshment, in the shape of intoxicating liquor, was by that time before each visitant. After waiting a few minutes, a rustle at the entrance

would cause you to turn your eyes in that direction, when, heralded by a crier with a gown and a staff of office, exclaiming, "Make way for my lord chief baron," that illustrious individual would be seen wending his way to his appointed seat. The man I write of was then about thirty-five, but he appeared much older, and in his robes of office and with his judicial wig had almost a venerable appearance. Having seated himself and bowed to the bar — one of them they called the double of Brougham had been a dissenting minister (he is dead now—he died "game," they told me)—the lord chief baron called for a cigar and glass of brandy-and-water, and, having observed that the waiter was in the room and that he hoped gentlemen would give their orders, the proceedings of the evening commenced. A jury was selected; the prosecutor opened his case, which, to suit the depraved taste of his patrons, was invariably one of seduction or crim. con., or if possible taken from some actual occurrence of the day. Witnesses were examined and cross-examined, the females being men dressed up in women's clothes, and everything was done that the most liquorish imagi-

nation could suggest, or that could pander most effectually to the lowest propensities of depraved humanity. I do not believe the audience could have stood this if it had not been for the drink, certainly no sober gentleman would sanction such an exhibition now. As it was, I believe many a youth fresh from home felt a little ashamed of himself that he should be in such company listening to such unmitigated ribaldry, but these reflections were soon drowned in the flowing bowl, and the lad, if he blushed at first, soon learned to laugh. I write of the time when the railway mania had filled London with reckless promoters, overpaid engineers, country attorneys, and parliamentary witnesses, only too anxious to see life, as they called it, and by whom this beastly entertainment was frequented night after night. I dare not even attempt to give a faint outline of the proceedings. After the defence, came the summing up, which men about town told you was a model of wit, but in which the wit bore but a small proportion to the obscenity. The jury were complimented on their intelligent and lascivious appearance, all the filthy particulars

which had been noticed were referred to dog Latin, and poetical quotations were plentifully thrown in; and by twelve, amidst the plaudits of the audience, the affair, so far as the Judge and Jury Club was concerned, was over. Then there was supper for such as wished it, and an entertainment to follow, either in the shape of a concert or of an exhibition of *Posés Plastiques*. To these subsequent entertainments ladies were generally admitted—and perhaps the less I say about them or their proceedings the better. If I refer to them at all, it is but as an illustration of the drinking customs of society. These Judge and Jury Clubs after all were but an excuse for drinking. They were held at public-houses,—there was drinking going on all the time the trial lasted, the waiter took care that your glass should not be empty a minute—nor could sober men have listened unless they had the drink. An attempt was made to introduce this kind of thing into the provinces, but it did not answer. In all our provincial towns there exists more or less a public opinion which guarantees decency to a certain extent. In the metropolis this public opinion does not exist. No

one knows what are my tastes and habits, or that I frequent Judge and Jury Clubs, and I lose no social status if I do ; but most of the men who patronise them have no social status to lose. We all live and act anonymously. In one of the lowest beershops in the New Cut one day I saw it announced that on Sunday night a Judge and Jury Club was held there. You may be sure its *habitués* were down very low in the social scale. It is too true that we are, as Tennyson says,

“Fish that love the mud,
Rising to no fancy flies.”

But man does not naturally revel in obscenity ; the modesty of nature will stick to him for years. But the Judge and Jury Clubs made you familiar with the manners of the stews ; and I solemnly believe that in Sodom and Gomorrah nothing more filthy could have been talked about, and that this side Pandemonium there was nothing more debasing or debased. If you wish to see your son thoroughly depraved, send him to a Judge and Jury Club. In a little while he will come back to you with every noble principle blotted out, with a mind stored with pollution, and with a fitting phraseology,

ready to run a mad career of debauchery and vice. For such as he while life lasts there can be no hope. Years ago the writer knew a fine young fellow, the heir to a decent fortune, connected with a noble family. The last time I was at the Judge and Jury he was employed as one of the mock counsel ; but he became too intemperate even for that, and enlisted, and miserably died. They have tragic ends, many of these frequenters of Judge and Jury Clubs, and it is sad to think that, when the merriment is the loudest, and the drink is most stimulating, and the fellowship most jovial, there is burlesque even then.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CAVE OF HARMONY.

READER, did you know the Cave of Harmony? If you did not, so much the better. It is said the Cave is altered since we were there—Thackeray, I think, had something to do with that reform—and that now nothing objectionable is sung. Still, I doubt whether drinking and harmony late at night can do much good. You and I, it may be, are old men,

“Ruin’d trunks on wither’d forks,
Empty scarecrows, you and I.”

You have run through youth with money in your pocket and time on your hands, and have seen all that life can offer, and know, what so many do not, that pleasure’s cup but sparkles near the brim.

What you have done and been has been wine working on the fiery impulses of young blood ; but now, sir, with your hair turning grey and your eyes growing dim, will you not lift up a warning voice, and ask youth to pause ere it take the final plunge which for years, it may be for ever, shall estrange it from innocence, and peace, and God ?

It is midnight in the great city in which we write. For a while sorrow and care are veiled from the eyes of men, and to the poorest and most toilworn come pleasant dreams. The shops have long been closed, the roar of the streets has died away, the theatres have discharged their jaded crowds, and as we walk along, meeting now and then a poor drunkard reeling home—or a policeman silently patrolling the streets—or one of the unfortunates, by turns man's victim and curse—or some of the votaries of dissipation who are awake when other men are asleep—we realize all the grandeur and poetry and magnificence of London by night, and wonder not that Savage and Johnson should have found such a fascination in the scene, and that other sons of genius have read such sermons in its eloquent stones. Let us stroll towards

Covent Garden—in a few hours it will be ringing with the oaths and execrations of seemingly all the market gardeners in Middlesex—and enter that doorway indicated by the glare of gas ; come with me down these stairs, and into that room, the door of which the waiter holds obligingly open. Let us stand here while we recover from the effect of the fumes of grog and the smoke of tobacco. You find yourself in a room holding some hundreds of gentlemen ; look around, this is a respectable place, this Cave of Harmony, there are no poor people here. We have heavy swells, moustached, and with white kid gloves—officers in the army—scions of noble houses—country gentlemen, and merchants, and lawyers in town on business—literary men, medical students, and old fogies, with every moral sensibility dead, who have sat here for years listening to the same songs and the same outpourings ; they could tell you something, these old fogies—what changes they have seen, as one generation after another of students and rakes and men about town have thought it fast to sup every night within these walls ; of course the majority in the room are clerks, and commercial gents, and fellows in Govern-

ment situations, learning here the extravagance which in time will compel them to commit frauds and forgery, and eventually perhaps land them in a felon's jail. For the Cave of Harmony is not a cheap place to sup at. The chop and baked potatoes are excellent but dear, and four or five shillings is a sum soon spent if you do as every one here does,—take your pint of stout, and three or four glasses of grog; and the chances are you will meet a friend, who will persuade you to make a night of it and stroll West with him, where you will see Vice flaunting more finely and with greater bravery than in any other capital in Europe. But let us forget these considerations. We are at one end of a long room, at the other is a raised platform, on which is a piano, and in front of which some half-dozen gentlemen are seated—these are the performers. Their faces you know well enough, for they are in much repute for dinners at the London Tavern or the Freemasons', and the last time I dined with the Indigent Blind—with a High Church dignitary in the chair—we had the whole half-dozen to assist; they are good singers, I willingly confess, and sing many of them touching songs of youth, and hope, and true love, and home—but they don't

sing the better for singing during the small hours and in a drinking saloon. That little Hebrew, who has been at it, he tells me, for upwards of forty years, is not an improvisatore like Theodore Hook, but he does it well enough for an audience good-natured and a little the worse for drink. The imitations of a barnyard, with its cows, and geese, and turkeys, and other live stock, by that poor, seedy, smiling German, are amusing to hear once, but every one here has heard them over and over again. What they need is something richer, and more spicy, as they term it. You see they are getting tired of sentimental songs, and war songs, and madrigals, and glees. They don't want to hear

“I know a maiden fair to see,”

or,

“Down in a flowery vale,
All on a summer morning,”

or,

“In going to my lonely bed
As one that would have slept.”

They are careless when Podder sings “Kathleen Mavourneen,” and are indifferent to the manner in which Brown renders

“Beautiful Venice. city of song.”

In old times, before the obscenity of the place was done away with, towards early morning it seemed a perfect Babel. A favourite's name was sounded—it was repeated with every variety of emphasis in every corner of the room; the tables were struck with drunken fists till the tumult became a perfect storm; the master of the place raps the table with an auctioneer's hammer—"Silence, gentlemen, if you please, Mr. —— will sing a comic song;" and immediately a man in a beggar's costume, and with the face of an idiot, jumps upon the stage. His appearance was the signal for a whirlwind of applause. He sang, with accompanying action, some dozen verses of doggerel, remarkable for obscenity and imbecility. You looked around, but not a blush did you see in that crowded room; not one single head was held down in shame; not one high-spirited gentleman rushed indignantly from the place. On the contrary, the singer was greeted with the most lavish expression of applause, continued so loudly and so long that again the proprietor had to announce, "Mr. —— will sing another comic song." But this time the comic singer would not dress for his part, and you saw a young, good-looking, well-

dressed, gentlemanly fellow voluntarily degrading himself for the pleasure of men more degraded still. Ah, was not this comic singer a happy fellow, well paid, courted by swells, living in a nice little cottage in the Hampstead-road? Alas, nothing of the kind! The man I write of, after having been the attraction of the Cave of Harmony for years, after having been feasted by the nobility and gentry, after having led a career of pleasure on the most extravagant scale, went down yet young as a beggar to one of our seaport towns, and, after craving in vain a refuge from the winter's cold and a crust of bread, died in the workhouse, and was buried in a pauper's grave. How many of the gay young fellows now around us will have a similar termination to their career! I never can pass the Cave of Harmony without thinking of the comic singer as last I saw him—in the very flush of health and life, stimulated by wine and applause, little dreaming of the workhouse in which he was so soon to beg for room to die. But this exhibition is of the past,—the room is reformed; it is now a gentlemanly place, where even the most refined of ladies might take her supper and listen to good

music ; and how it is patronized is clear, when I state that on the night of the marriage of the Princess Royal, there were consumed in it 21 dozen kidneys, 478 chops, 280 Welsh rabbits, 1500 glasses of stout, and a hogshead of pale ale.

CHAPTER IX.

DISCUSSION CLUBS.

IT is the condition of a public-house that it must do a good business some way or other. When Mr. Hinton got his licence for Highbury Barn, seeing that the dining apartment fell off, he told the licensing magistrates that he was obliged to institute Soirées Dansantes. Sometimes the publican gets a female dressed up in a Bloomer costume ; sometimes he has for his barman a giant, or a dwarf, or an Albino, or a Kafir chief ; now the greatest attraction he can get is a young lady with wonderfully dressed-up hair, to spoon with young swells over the counter. Actually, as an attraction to decent people to go and drink their pot of beer, I find the following advertisement in the *Morning Advertiser* :—

“ The Sheep-eater of Hindostan.—To be seen, the Sheep-eater of Hindostan, representing an exhibi-

tion which took place on the 3rd of March, 1796, before Colonel Patrick Douglass and other officers of a battalion of Native Infantry, and a great concourse of the inhabitants of the military station of Futtehghur. It is engraved from a sketch, taken on the spot by a native artist, and under the inspection of Major-General Hardwicke, F.R.S. The Sheep-eater was a native of India, about thirty years of age, five feet nine inches high, slender, well formed, and rather muscular. He was attended by a very old man, whom he called his father or preceptor, termed by the natives Gooroo or Priest, who stated he had formerly followed the same practice. He was above the ordinary stature of the natives of India, and wore his hair, which was of great length, coiled into the form of a turban; and his beard was twisted like a rope, and nearly reached his feet, being five feet eight inches in length. The exhibitor began his operation by raising the sheep from the ground with his teeth. He then threw the animal on its back, and, with his teeth and hands only, separated the limbs, and stript the flesh from the bones. After mixing dust with the meat, by rubbing it on the ground, in that dirty

state he swallowed what he tore off. The last part of the operation was chewing the leaves of a plant, the local name of which is Madaar (*asclepias gigantea*), and the milky juice, which is of a very corrosive nature, he swallowed. Having made a collection of money, and the assemblage of people being much increased, he offered to eat a second sheep, and actually commenced the operation as before. It may be proper to observe, that the sheep in most parts of India are as small as the Welsh sheep of Great Britain. No. 1 represents lifting the sheep from the ground with his teeth only. 2. Having thrown the sheep on its back, he extends the limbs, preparatory to No. 3. 3. Ripping the animal open from the flank to the breast. 4. Having removed the intestines, &c., he buries his head in the body, to drink the blood collected. 5. Exhibiting his face, after this sanguinary draught. 6. Having devoured every portion of flesh from the bones, he chews the plant Madaar. 7. After changing his waistcloth, he returns with his Gooroo, or préceptor, and offers to eat the second sheep, for the satisfaction of the increased number of spectators.”

I do not give the name of the spirited proprietor, but in his advertisement he declares he intends exhibiting it *over the bar for a short time gratuitously*.

Now in the same manner the publicans provide a weekly discussion meeting for that part of the public that loves to hear itself talk. There was one (it may be that they have ceased to exist now) at the Belvidere, Pentonville; another at the Horns, Kennington. Fleet-street is much favoured. There are the Temple Forum, and the Cogers' Hall, in Shoe-lane. These are gratuitous, like the picture in the above advertisement—that is, you are expected to sit and drink all night. These are not places like the Robin Hood Society, and other political debating societies of the Pitt era. The most celebrated one was that which met not far from the Temple, presided over by the editor of a Sunday paper, and assisted by several reporters connected with the daily journals. One of them not long since contested an Irish borough on Protestant principles, but unfortunately, instead of being returned, found himself in gaol for election expenses. Besides these, there are many third and fourth-rate

literary men—a class, I fear (I speak of the minors), the most braggart, lying, and needy under heaven—men who are going to do wonders, but who never do, whose success, if such a term may be applied to their career, arises simply from their power of brag, and from the possession of an enviable amount of self-esteem. Then there are briefless barristers, but too happy to have an opportunity of airing their dictionaries; and tradesmen, and clerks, all fancying that there is no need why they should hide their talents under a napkin. Still these places do not flourish, and there are more bad speeches made than good ones. For grammar and pronunciation many of the orators seem to have a profound contempt. This is not agreeable. Again, you are cooped up in an inconvenient apartment, suffocated by tobacco-smoke, and very unpleasantly affected by the beer and gin-and-water which every one feels bound to consume. The waiter is in the room, and you are expected to give your orders. The speaking is a secondary consideration. The first thing you are required to do is to drink. I have in my mind's eye a young fellow who was a great man at one of these places. He was a clerk with limited means,

but he came to these places night after night, and drank and spent his money freely. It is the old tale over again. He was intrusted with his employer's cash. He applied some of it to liquidate his expenses. He was unable to replace it. Discovery was made at last; he is now in Newgate, and his wife—for he was just married—is breaking her young heart with shame and want. The curse of these public-houses is that they lead men into expense and reduce them to poverty, if they do not almost necessitate crime. A discussion is all very well, and the habit of being able to get up and say a few words when occasion requires pertinent and *apropos* is invaluable, but to acquire that habit it is scarcely worth while to sit all night toying, while Smithers is playing old gooseberry with his H's or O'Flaherty raving of the wrongs of the Green Isle. The questions discussed are generally such as are peculiar to the time. Was Lord Cardigan a hero? Did Sir Benjamin Hall deserve well of the public for his conduct with reference to Sunday bands? Did the Palmerston Cabinet deserve the support of the country? Would Lord John Russell's scheme of national education, if carried out, be

a national benefit? Is Mr. Gladstone a deserving character? Is Mr. Bright entitled to the confidence of the nation? Let men talk on these subjects, if they will, and as long as they will, but I believe they will think more clearly, and talk better, and come sooner to a rational decision, if they do not drink. I am sure I have seen the audience and the orators more inflamed by beer than by eloquence, and when turned out into the street after a long sitting, many, I imagine, have seen a couple of moons and double the usual allowance of lamps and police. The worst of it is, that after the discussion is over, there will be always a few stop to have a bit of supper and another glass. I remember, just as the Crimean war broke out, I was at one of the places to which I have already referred; the subject was the propriety of erecting on the ruins of Turkey a united Greece. The Philhellenists came down in great force, and young Greeks, Sophocles and Ionides, and many more screaming at the top of their voices, were there as well. What with the excitement of the subject and what with the excitement of the drink, the whole affair settled into a regular orgie, and the

tumult of that night still rings wildly in my ear. Dumbiedikes would have stared at the gift of tongues exhibited on that occasion.

If you admire pot-house oratory, then attend one of these places. The chair is generally taken about nine, and the proceedings close at twelve. A gentleman already agreed on commences the discussion, then the debate is left to drag its slow length along, sometimes giving rise to animated discussions, and at other times being a terrible failure. What is considered the treat of the evening is generally something of this sort—An indifferent speaker, perhaps a stranger, gets up and makes a short speech, which brings up one of the old seasoned debaters, great in his own eyes and in those of almost every one present. I assure you he is down upon his unhappy predecessor in fine style, making mincemeat of his facts, and ridiculing his logic. The easier his work is, the more does he labour at it. The audience frantically applaud, and the orator, as he sits down, evidently thinks Brougham could not have slashed an opponent in better style. The gravity of these speakers is really amusing. Did they speak the language

of millions—did principles of eternal import dwell upon their tongue—did nations breathlessly wait for their decisions—did they shake the arsenal and fulmine over Greece—they could not set about their work in a more determined manner. And Jones, from his tremendous castigation of Palmerston, or fierce diatribe against Lord John, will sneak off quietly to his back garret in Pentonville, just as we can imagine Diocletian abandoning an empire to plant cabbages at Salona, or Charles V. taking to watch-making and pastry after roasting heretics by wholesale in Holland and Belgium. It is clear some of the speakers are naturally good orators; but the regular staggers have a seedy appearance, denoting that they suffer from that eternal want of pence which vexes public men, and that peculiar redness of the nose or soddenness of the skin which indicates the drinker; and if you go much you will find a paper with five-shilling subscriptions, to which you will be asked to give your name, for the benefit of some prominent debater whose affairs do not seem to have prospered in spite of their master's matchless powers of oratory and perspicacity when he has to deal

with questions of imperial finance. The truth is, the money has been spent here in drink that was required elsewhere, and wife and children have starved at home while the orator was declaiming against despotism abroad. The man Finlen was a fair type of the public-house orator—vain, wordy, utterly regardless of decent life and domestic ties. I fear the only class benefited by these discussions are the landlords, who point to their door and whisper in your ears, Admission gratis. Yes, that is true ; but the egress, ah, there's the rub ! It is that for which you must pay, and pay handsomely too, as hundreds of poor fellows have found to their cost.

CHAPTER X.

CREMORNE.

“**I**N a set of pictures illustrative of Greek customs, it was quite impossible to leave out the *hetæræ*, who gave such a peculiar colouring to Grecian levity, and exercised so potent a sway over the life of the younger members of the community. Abundant materials for such a sketch exist, for the Greeks made no secret of matters of this kind ; the difficulty has been not to sacrifice the vividness of the picture of the ordinary intercourse with these women to the demands of our modern sense of propriety,” says Professor Becker, in his truly admirable work on the Private Life of the Ancient Greeks. In the same manner, and for the same reason, the modern sense of propriety is supposed to be in the way of any very graphic description of Cremorne ; yet, according to all accounts, we have

hetæræ almost as bewitching as Aspasia or Corinthian Lais ; and if our students, and learned clergy, and holy bishops write long articles about the Athenian Dionysia, only held once a year, why should we not speak of ours, which last all the summer, and the scene of which is Cremorne ? At the Dionysia the most unbridled merriment and drunkenness were the order of the day, and were held quite blameless. For a while the most sober-minded bade adieu to the stringency of habit, following the well-known Greek maxim—

“Ne’er blush with drink to spice the feast’s gay hour,
And, reeling, own the mighty wine-god’s power.”

So it is in Cremorne. If Corinth had her groves sacred to Aphrodite, so has Cremorne. It offends our modern sense of propriety to speak of such matters. English people only see what they wish to see. If you are true—if you look at real life and say what you think of it, you shock our modern sense of propriety. We may talk about drainage and ventilation, and the advantages of soap, but there we must stop. Keep the outside clean, but don’t look within. Thus it is our writers make such blunders. For instance, good-meaning Mrs. Stowe,

after she had written "Uncle Tom," came here to be lionized, and to write a book about us. She did so, and a very poor book it was. But I must quote one passage from "Sunny Memories." In writing of a visit she paid to the Jardin Mabille in Paris, she writes: "Entrance to this Paradise can be had, for gentlemen a dollar, ladies *free*; this tells the whole story. Nevertheless, do not infer that there are not respectable ladies there; it is a place so remarkable that very few strangers stay long in Paris without taking a look at it. And though young ladies residing in Paris never go, and matrons very seldom, yet occasionally it is the case that some ladies of respectability look in. Nevertheless, aside from the impropriety inherent in the very nature of the waltzing, there was not a word, look, or gesture of immorality or impropriety. The dresses were all decent, and, if there was vice, it was masked under the guise of polite propriety. How different, I could not but reflect, is all this from the gin-palaces of London! There, there is indeed a dazzling splendour of gaslights, but there is nothing artistic, nothing refined, nothing appealing to the imagination. There are only hogsheads and barrels,

and the appliances for serving out strong drink ; and there for one sole end—the swallowing of the fiery stimulant—came the nightly thousands, from the gay and well-dressed to the haggard and tattered in the last stage of debasement. The end is the same, by how different paths ! Here they dance along the path to ruin with flowers and music—there they cast themselves bodily, as it were, into the lake of fire.” A more unfair comparison, I think, was never drawn ; a drinking-shop is much the same everywhere, and in Paris as well as in London, people, to use Mrs. Stowe’s own words, cast themselves bodily into the lake of fire. We have our Jardin Mabille, but of course Mrs. Stowe never went there—as we have known good people confessing to entering theatres in Germany or France who on no account would have gone near one at home. If Mrs. Stowe had confessed to going to Cremorne, she would have been cut, and so she went to the Paris Cremorne instead ; but to write a true book on England, she should have gone to Cremorne. Since then it has become the fashion ; on one occasion the aristocracy had it all to themselves—an experiment which, however, was a failure.

The night was wet, and there was no fun. Look at Cremorne; is it not one, as Disraeli is reported to have said, of the institutions of the country? The Chelsea vestry complained of Cremorne because it injured the property in the neighbourhood;—the defence was that Mr. Simpson had spent 30,000*l.* or 40,000*l.* upon it; that he had given 1270*l.* to the Wellington fund, and 300*l.* (the profits of one night's entertainment) to the fund for the relief of the victims of the Indian mutiny. I have no doubt Mr. Smith, the present lessee, is equally ready to perform charitable deeds. To be generous, and at the same time make money, is a double pleasure to most mortals.

The gardens are beautiful, are kept in fine order, are adorned with really fine trees, and are watered by the Thames, here almost a silver stream. Though near London, on a summer evening the air is fresh and balmy, the amusements are varied, the company are genteel in appearance, and here, as in Paris, they dance along the path to ruin with flowers and music. If Mrs. Stowe gives the preference to the Parisians, she may be right, but I am inclined to dispute the grounds of that preference. The

gin-palaces are filled with our sots, with our utter wrecks, with all that is loathsome and low in man or woman. Your son, fresh from home and its sacred influences, is shy of entering a gin-palace at first. He goes there with a blush upon his cheek, and a sense of shame at his heart. He shrinks from its foul companionship, and when he has come out he resolves never to be what he has seen under those accursed roofs. But you take him to Cremorne, or you send him to the Argyle Rooms, or the Holborn Casino, and he is surrounded by temptation that speaks to him with irresistible power. The men are as fine fellows as you would wish to see anywhere. The women are well-dressed and well-behaved. The drink does not repel, but merely stimulates the hot passions of youth, and lulls the conscience. For one lad or woman ruined in a gin-shop there are twenty that are ruined at Cremorne.

As to the morality of such places, that is not to be settled dogmatically by me or by any one else. Tennyson talks of men fighting their doubts, and gathering strength; in the same manner, men may fight temptation and gather strength, and one man may merely spend a pleasant evening where another

may in the same interval of time ruin himself for life. The tares and the wheat, in this confused world of ours, grow side by side. Unnaturally, we bring up our sons only to pluck what we deem the wheat; and immediately they are left to themselves, they begin gathering the tares, which we have not taught them are such, and have for them at least the charm of novelty. It does not do to say there is no pleasure in the world; there is a great deal. The grass is green, though, it may be, sad sinners tread it. The sun shines as sweetly on carrion as on the Koh-i-noor. The lark high up at heaven's gate sings as loud a song of praise, whether villains or lovers listen to its lays. Places are what we make them. I fear there are many blackguards at Cremorne; the women most of them are undoubtedly hetærae, and yet what a place it is for fun! How jolly are all you meet! How innocent are all the amusements,—the ascent of the balloon—the dancing—the equestrian performances—the comic song—the illuminations—the fireworks—the promenade on the grass lawn or in the gas-lit paths; the impulses that come to us in the warm breath of the summer eve, how grateful are they all, and

what a change from Cheapside or from noisy manufactories still more confined ! By this light the scene is almost a fairy one. Can there be danger here ? Is there here nothing artistic—nothing refined—nothing appealing to the imagination ? Come here, Mrs. Stowe, and judge. You will scandalize, I know, that portion of the religious public that never yet has looked at man and society honestly in the face, but you will better understand the frightful hypocrisies of our domestic life ; you will better understand how it is that a religion which we pay so much for, and to which we render so much outward homage, has so little hold upon the heart and life. There is no harm in Cremorne, if man is born merely to enjoy himself—to eat, drink, be merry, and die. I grant it is rather inconvenient for a young man who has his way to fight in life to indulge a taste for pleasure, to launch out into expenses beyond his means, to mix with company that is more amusing than moral and to keep late hours ; and young fellows who go to Cremorne must run all these risks. It may do you, my good sir, no harm to go there. You have arrived at an age when the gaieties of life have

ceased to be dangerous. You come up by one of the Citizen boats to Chelsea after business hours, and stroll into the garden and view the balloon, or sit out the ballet, or gaze with a leaden eye upon the riders, and the clowns, and the dancing, or the fireworks, and return home in decent time to bed ; and if you waste a pound or two, you can afford it. But it is otherwise with inflammable youth—a clerk, it may be, in a merchant's warehouse on 30s. a week ; and it is really alarming to think what excitements are thus held out to the passions, at all times so difficult to control. There are the North Woolwich Gardens—there is Highbury Barn—all rivalling Cremorne, and all capable of containing some thousands of idle pleasure-seekers. Vauxhall, with its drunken orgies, is gone never to return—the place that knows it now will know it no more for ever—but such places are what thoughtless people call respectable, are frequented by respectable people ; and amidst mirth and music, foaming up in the sparkling wine, looking out of dark blue eyes, reddening the freshest cheeks, and nestling in the richest curls, there lurks the great enemy of God

and man. Young man, such an enemy you cannot resist; your only refuge is in flight. Ah, you think that face fair as you ask its owner to drink with you; it would have been fairer had it never gone to Cremorne. A father loved her as the apple of his eye; she was the sole daughter of his home and heart, and here she comes night after night to drink and dance; a few years hence and you shall meet her drinking and cursing in the lowest gin-palaces of St. Giles's, and the gay fast fellows around you now will be digging gold in Australia, or it may be walking the streets in rags, or it may be dying in London hospitals of lingering disease, or, which is worse than all, it may be living on year after year dead to all that is divine. The path that leads to life is strait and narrow, and few there be who find it.

One night as I was walking with a friend in Paris, the correspondent of one of the London daily papers, we passed the *Maison Dorée*, renowned all over the civilized world for its magnificent dinners.

My friend said, "I had a famous dinner here not long since."

"With whom?" said I.

“With young A——,” was his answer.

“Indeed! Do you know what has become of him?”

“No.”

“He has committed suicide!”

“Impossible.”

“Indeed he did, this night week. The fact has been kept out of the papers, but it is too true.”

I then went on to narrate the painful tragedy, and though I would hurt the feelings of no one living, yet I cannot omit a slight reference to the case as a warning to young men entering on a career of gaiety. The gentleman to whom I refer was a man of singular talent, and had commenced life under remarkably advantageous circumstances. Young—he was only thirty-one when he terminated his career—he had already acquired in his profession a European reputation; he was the associate and friend of some of our most popular authors and wits, more especially of that class who have endeavoured to laugh down temperance reformers and everything connected with them. One fine day he went down to Cremorne. It was noon when he entered, and he called for brandy-and-water. It

was brought him ; he drank it, and called for more. Gaily he drank it, and gaily he treated every one around ; for was he not a jolly good fellow ? The day advanced, the company kept crowding in, and there was poor A—— still drinking. Summer night in all her beauty came, and fast men from town drove down in Hansoms, and women, fair and frail, flocked around them ; and there was singing and dancing, and eating and drinking, and laughing and making merry, and in crowded shops workmen's wives were buying the Sunday's dinner—for it was Saturday evening—and noble women were thinking of what they should say to their little ones on the morrow, and pious divines were thinking how best they could edify the saint, or reclaim the backsliding, or warn the sinner ; when, in the twinkling of an eye, poor A—— dashed a drop of Prussic acid into a glass of soda water, staggered twelve steps, and then, in that garden of Circe—in that assembly of pleasure-seekers—in the very climax of their mirth and gaiety—dropped down dead. Such was an outline of the sad story I had to tell as I and my friend passed the *Maison Dorée*.

All round London there is a belt of dancing

gardens, Cremornes in a small way, which do infinite mischief, patronized by girls who are glad of any excuse to run away from home and work, and to get a little fresh air, and pick up a sweetheart. The gentlemen are generally fast youths of eighteen or twenty, loud in talk, much given to smoke cheap cigars, and to wear ridiculously tight trousers, and uncommonly ugly and broad-brimmed hats. The gardens are invariably connected with a public-house, and have a dancing platform, a German band, and shady walks and dark alcoves. In these latter the would-be swell prefers to sit chatting with his girl, drinking his grog, and watching the flying couples, rather than in figuring himself on the light fantastic toe. It will be easily seen that such places must be very favourable to the development of vice and immorality. The girls are young and silly and giddy. They generally go to these places alone, or accompanied by other girls. They never have with them at any rate a parent or brother, or fitting guardian. As they have little to spend, and spend that little on dress, of course the gentleman stands treat; they drink and sup and dance at his expense. Their intentions are good;

they have no desire to go astray, but they do. They are tempted and they fall; the result too often is—

“One more unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly unfortunate,
Gone to her death.”

CHAPTER XI.

LIFE IN THE EAST.

LONDON is several cities rolled into one. If we walk along Regent-street, it is a city of gorgeous shops,—if you turn into the West, of parks and palaces,—if you traverse St. Giles, of gin and dirt ;—again, in Belgravia it is rich and grand,—in Pimlico it is poor and pretentious,—in Russell-square it is well to do,—in Islington it is plain and pious ; and, strange as it may seem, the people are equally localized in their ideas. Jobson, the stockbroker, lives at Clapham, and for years he has never set foot in any other streets than those leading from the Stock Exchange to that select and favoured spot. The law clerks, who live in Pimlico, seldom stray further than John-street, Bedford-row. The city gents from Islington and Holloway generally cluster round the Bank or the Post-office,

and for years go in the morning and return at night by one unvaried route. The races are equally distinct. The swells in the Park, the millers in Mark-lane, the graziers in the new cattle-market, the Jews in Houndsditch or Holywell-street, the prim pale lads in the city, the sailors at Shadwell and Deptford and Wapping, the German sugar-bakers in Whitechapel, the Chinese opium smokers in Tiger Bay, really form as distinct communities as any race of

“Red Indians dwelling beyond the sunset,
And the baths of all the Western stars.”

A large book might be written on the East of London, the seat of industry and commerce, of hopeless poverty and irrepressible crime. There are no such fever dens anywhere as those of Whitechapel. In more than one of its streets reside most of the hungriest and most daring thieves in the metropolis. In this neighbourhood felonies and violent attacks on the person are of constant recurrence. It seems as if in that teeming district no amount of philanthropic or religious agency can keep pace with the luxuriant growth of wretchedness and depravity. City missionaries, who

have been labouring there for years, tell me the place gets worse and worse daily—that the boys and girls of five are hardened in vicious ways—that they are as criminally precocious as in other neighbourhoods are boys and girls of fifteen. Gin-palaces and music-halls and theatres flourish, and I saw quite a rush of boys in Leman-street, where, at the Garrick, was being played a piece with the attractive title of the *Boy Brigand*. In the Tower Hamlets district there are 1250 licensed victuallers. While I write, I find at Eaton-place, Whitehouse-lane, Mile-end, the water-closets are in the front parlour, and the houses are in a beastly state; that in Whitechapel patients who die of fever in the hospital are removed to their late homes, there to taint the air and to generate fresh disease previous to burial; and that at Bethnal-green a couple of sausage makers have been convicted of using shockingly diseased meat. I heard a well-known preacher say the other day it was easy to worship God in Devonshire; equally true is it that it must be difficult to do so in the far East. On the morning of the Sabbath as you walk down Whitechapel you would scarce fancy you were in a

Christian land. It is true church bells ring and public-houses are shut up, and well-clad hundreds may be seen walking to their respective places of worship—possibly you may meet a crowd of two or three hundred earnest men in humble life, if we may judge by appearances, singing revival hymns, as they wend their way to the East London Theatre where Mr. Booth teaches of heaven and happiness to those who know little of one or the other; nevertheless, the whole district has a non-church-going look, nor can it well be otherwise. I find a Commercial-road auxiliary of the City Mission has just been formed. From a report read at the inaugural meeting it appears that in one of the parishes in which it will labour, the population amounts to not less than 54,000, and that to meet the spiritual necessities of this large number there is church and chapel accommodation for about 9000 persons, thus clearly proving that for five-sixths of the population no means of religious instruction and edification are provided. As you walk along Whitechapel of a Sunday morning there are butchers' shops full of customers, pie-shops doing a roaring trade, photographers all alive, as

they always are on a Sunday. If you want apples or oranges, boots and shoes, ready-made clothes, articles for the toilette or the drawing-room, curiosities of all kinds, and newspapers of all sorts, you can get them anywhere in abundance in this district; and if you look up the narrow courts and streets—horrid places of evil repute by night—you will see in the dirty, busy, noisy crowd around you, ample evidence of Sabbath-breaking. Of a summer night, when from close garrets and stinking slums creep out into the sunshine their tens of thousands to drink and smoke and lounge, when countless pale urchins, ragged and shoeless, are lively as grasshoppers, when lads and lasses put on their smartest, when the balmy air gives relief and refreshing to the poorest and feeblest and oldest, you might fancy the place to be Vanity Fair.

In the immediate neighbourhood of Whitechapel is St. George's-street, perhaps better known by its ancient name of Ratcliff-highway. Whitechapel is considered low by a Belgravian. In Whitechapel the shopkeepers are shocked if you talk of going to Ratcliff-highway; and in Ratcliff-highway the

humble Temperance and religious labourers in that field tell me that they are never insulted by the women as they are in the Commercial-road, and the tradesmen say the same. How comes it then that St. George's-street, as it is now called, has such a bad name? Assuredly it is part and parcel of the metropolis ; assuredly the queen's writ is a power there ; it enjoys the protection of the police, it pays rates and taxes, employs scavengers and dustmen, boasts churches and chapels, is not cut off from the rest of the empire, is traversed by railways, by cabs and buses, and by postmen. Nevertheless, the place is not a favourite spot to visit. Lately a letter from an Englishman was published in the *Times*, complaining of the magistrates of Hamburgh, because when he was coming from church with some ladies, he strayed into a street where his sense of decorum was very properly shocked. It ill becomes an Englishman to write of the immorality of Hamburgh, or any other continental town. Let him walk down St. George's-street or any other similar spot where vice loses all its charms by appearing in all its grossness. I fear that it is not true generally to the eyes of the class she leads astray, that

“Vice is a monster of such hideous mien,
That to be hated, needs but to be seen,”

but I think it is true, or at any rate it contains a portion of truth, so far as regards what was once Ratcliff-highway, a stroll in which place is sure to shock more senses than one. In general unsavouriness it surpasses Cologne with its many separate and independent stenchcs, or even Bristol or a Welsh seaport town.

Ratcliff-highway lies contiguous to the commerce and the port of London. The men and boys engaged in navigating merchant vessels belonging to ports of the British Empire are nearly 300,000 ; and of this multitude a large portion at some time or other resides in Ratcliff-highway. If the ships that move to and fro upon the bosom of the Thames average 50 yards, they would reach half way across the Atlantic. Jack, when ashore, resides here, and Jack ashore is the weakest and simplest of men. As an illustration of the way in which Jack is done—whether in any provincial port or London, for crimps are the same all the world over,—let me refer to a case of which I made a note at the time. A man named Glover, the landlord of a low public-house, a crimp and sailors’

lodging-house keeper, was summoned under the 235th and 236th clauses of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854, charged with having taken into his possession the moneys and effects of James Hall, a seaman, and with having refused to return and pay the same back to Hall when requested to do so. It appears, after being engaged in the Black Sea in the transport service during the late war, Hall, who had to receive 30*l.* 15*s.*, took up his quarters at Glover's, and made him his "purser." Glover charged him 14*s.* a week for his lodgings, the same as the Sailor's Home, but at the end of 16 days he told him that his money was all gone, and bought the plaintiff's neckerchief of him for 1*s.*, which he also spent in drink. The sailor, finding himself destitute, had applied to the authorities, who summoned Glover. Glover, in his defence, stated that Hall had spent his money in drink and treating, keeping a couple of bagpipers to play to him all the time he was on the spree. Glover produced the following extraordinary account against Hall:—

"Dec. 9th.—20 pints of rum, 2*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.*; 20 quarts of beer, and 15 ounces of tobacco, 15*s.* 10*d.*—8 glasses of rum, and 2*s.* 6*d.* borrowed money, 4*s.* 6*d.*

11th.—Borrowed money, 2s. 6d.; 5 pints of rum, 5 gills of rum, and 15 quarts of ale, 1l. 12s. 6d.; 6 ounces of tobacco, 2 glasses of gin, and 2 gills of brandy, 6s. 6d. 12th.—Cash, 2s., 15 pints of rum, and 28 gills of rum, 3l.; 4 quarts, half a gallon, and 22 gills of beer, 1l. 3s. 9d.; 15 glasses of rum and 11 glasses of beer, 9s. 3d.; pint of brandy and 16 glasses of gin, 8s.; 3 ounces of tobacco and $3\frac{1}{2}$ glasses of gin, 12s. $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. 13th.—18 pints of rum, 15 gills of rum, and 26 quarts of beer, 3l. 4s.; 26 bottles of lemonade, and 28 gills of beer, 1l.; 14 ounces of tobacco, 6 glasses of gin, 6s. 2d.; 12 glasses of gingerade, and cash 5s., 8s.; 1 week's board, 14s. Paid for clothes, 1l. 2s. 6d.; 2 pints of rum, 10 gills of rum, and 4 glasses of beer, 16s.; 24 glasses of spirits, 9 quarts of beer, and 7 ounces of tobacco, 14s. 7d. 15th.—16 half glasses of spirits, 10 glasses and 2 gills of rum, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounce of tobacco, and beer, 2s. 10d.; fortnight's board, 1l. 8s.; cash, 2l. 18s.; spirits, tobacco, and rum, 4s. $1\frac{1}{2}$ d.; cash, 5s. 17th.—Cash, 7s., 20 glasses of spirits, and 8 quarts of ale, 9s. 4d. 18th.—Ale, spirits, and tobacco, 16s. 4d. 19th.—35 glasses of spirits, and 20 glasses of ale, and 2 glasses of

brandy, 1*l.* 4*s.* 10*d.* 20th.—Ale, tobacco, and cash, 7*s.* 24th, 25th, and 26th.—Ale and spirits, 7*s.* 11*d.*, and other items, making up the amount in hand. The defendant had refused to deliver up Hall's clothes on the plea that the man was in his debt. Now in Ratcliff-highway such men as Glover abound, and in a worldly sense I fear do well. Directly Jack is wheedled into the den of such it is all up with him till his money is spent, when he is bundled off to sea more rapidly than he is hurried by the lodging-house keeper on shore. The whole district seems to have come into existence for the sake of, by fair means or foul, easing poor Jack of his cash. You meet him everywhere, rough and generous and foolishly jolly; female eyes follow him up and down the street; the gin-palace keeper, the beershop keeper, the coffee-house keeper are all in a league against him. One shop sells the rascally life-buoys, the deceptive character of which has been amply exposed by Mr. J. Greenwood; at another are the enormous boots, which only navvies and sailors have strength to wear; at another there are oilskin caps, and coats and trousers, or rough woollen shirts, piled up in

gigantic masses. One shop rejoices in compasses and charts, and another in the huge silver watches which Jack invariably affects. Literature seems little patronized in this district. The descendants of Abraham swarm here ; they sell little fish fried in oil ; they deal in second-hand clothes ; they keep lodging-houses ; I believe they stick at nothing to turn a penny, and don't break their hearts if the penny turns out a dishonest one. Everything has a nautical adaptation. The songs sung are nautical. The last time I was there an old woman was singing to a crowd of the "Saucy Sailor Boy," who, coming disguised in poverty to his lady love, is by her ignominiously rejected, to whom rejecting he tells of his real riches, and by whom the rejection is eagerly recalled, but in vain, for the Saucy Sailor Boy declares—

“ Do you think I am foolish, love ?
Do you think I am mad ?
For to wed a poor country girl,
When there's fortune to be had ?

“ So I'll cross the briny ocean,
Where the meadows are so green,
And since you have refused my offer, love,
Some other girl shall wear the ring.”

Up and down Ratcliff-highway do the sailors of every country under heaven stroll—Greeks and Scythians, bond and free. Uncle Tom's numerous progeny are there—Lascars, Chinese, bold Britons, swarthy Italians, sharp Yankees, fair-haired Saxons, and adventurous Danes—men who worship a hundred gods, and men who worship none. They have ploughed the stormy main, they have known the perils of a treacherous sea and of a lee shore; but there are worse perils, and those perils await them here. It is night, and the glare of gas gives the street a cheerful appearance. We pass the Sailor's Home, a noble institution which deserves our cordial support and praise, and find at almost every step pitfalls for poor Jack. Every few yards we come to a beer-shop or a public-house decorated as gaudily as possible, rejoicing in some nautical sign, such as *The Jolly Sailor*, the doors of which stand temptingly open, and from the upper room of which may be heard the sound of the mirth-inspiring violin, and the tramp of toes neither "light nor fantastic."

Occasionally you can peep behind a curtain partially unveiled, and catch a hasty glimpse of a

tinselled ballet-girl or painted syren, if such a term is applicable to the unlovely female, whose companionship is undesirable in every point of view. How diseased these women are only medical men can tell, but the mischief they do is immense. In cigar shops the same class of women lurk. Of course they are in league with the publican and sinner, at whose bar you may see them in small groups, waiting with wolfish glare. You may well shrink from entering; you feel repelled rather than attracted. It is not here as at the West end, where the most fastidious may be tempted by the grace and prettiness of the presiding goddess, who hands you your glass of sherry with a winning smile, under the influence of which one might even have a bumper of South African port. Nor are all the tars you meet very pleasant fellows to look at. They are some of them as wild and reckless as the ocean wave on which they live, capering with outlandish gait, and to borrow from Mr. Disraeli, "Batavian grace." Sailors are indeed fish out of water, when on dry land; but after all, the publicans of this district are some of them as bad as any men can be. I fear the law is evaded by them; two houses especially were

pointed out to me as always doing business at prohibited hours. There were some public-houses here—I know not if the custom prevails now—to which was attached a crew of infamous women; these bring Jack into the house to treat them, but while Jack drinks gin the landlord gives them from another tap water, and then against their sober villany poor Jack has no chance. I fear many respectable people in this neighbourhood have thus made fortunes. Jack is prone to grog and dancing, and here they meet him at every turn. Women, wild-eyed, boisterous, with cheeks red with rouge and flabby with intemperance, decked out with dresses and ribbons of the gayest hue, are met by hundreds—all alike equally coarse, and insolent, and unlovely in manners and appearance, but all equally resolved on victimizing poor Jack. They dance with him in the beer-shop—they drink with him in the bar—they walk with him in the streets—they go with him to such places as Wilton's Music Hall, where each Jack-tar may be seen sitting with his pipe and his pot, witnessing dramatic performances, very sensational, but really, on the score of morality, not so objectionable as those I have seen applauded by an

Adelphi audience or patronized by the upper classes. And thus the evening passes away; the publicans grow rich, the keepers of infamous houses fatten on their dishonest gains—obese Jews and Jewesses become more so. As the hour of closing approaches, the disorder of the night reaches its climax. In St. George's-street you can always tell when midnight has come. The grog gets into Jack's head—the unruly tongue of woman is loosened—there are quarrels, and blows, and blood drawn, and heads broken, and cries of police, and victims in abundance for the station-house, or the hospital, or the union-house, or the lunatic asylum. Not unfrequently in that dark hour, some forlorn one, reft of hope or maddened by drink and disease and shame, plunges in the muddy waters of some neighbouring dock, to find the oblivion she found not in the dancing and drinking houses which have made Ratcliff-highway infamous all the world over.

CHAPTER XII.

CALDWELL'S.

A STRANGER, ignorant of our inner life, and unacquainted with our social system, knowing only that we call ourselves a Christian people, and that we boast that Christianity places women in a peculiarly favoured position, might dwell among us for awhile, and, seeing how woman is flattered and followed, might imagine that her condition was perfect, and that here, at least, woman, the weak, was sheltered by man, the strong. In the dazzling ball-room, on the glittering promenade, he might meet the lovely and the fair, and deem that they were no brilliant exception, but as they were sheltered and loved, so were sheltered and loved all of their common sex. Grieved would he be to find out his mistake ; yet more grieved would he be to know that the graceful drapery that added to the beauty

that everywhere flashed upon his eye was wrought by tender and delicate women, who, pale and wan, slave at the needle from morn till eve, and from eve till again the dim grey of morn gleamed in the east—by women withered before their prime—by women who, for no crime, but from their simple desire to live by the honest and honourable labour of their hands, are shut up in heated and unhealthy rooms, debarred from social duties and joys, and who know nothing of life but its wants and woes—by women who can find in slavery itself nothing more forlorn than their melancholy fate—by women to the majority of whom there is no honest way of escape from the lingering death that besets them, but the grave.

We would guard our readers against giving way to mawkish sentimentalism; *that* it is not our aim to excite. Much has been reformed of late. There are employers who are all they should be; there are milliners' and dressmakers' assistants who find their labour what all healthy labour is, a blessing, and not a curse. Not every dressmaker is beautiful, nor the daughter of one who has seen better days. It is true that some of these unfortu-

nate girls are the daughters of “clergymen, medical men, and officers;” but it is because they partake of our common humanity—because they have human blood and human hearts—because life was given them that in it they might bless and be blessed—because, in their injuries and wrongs, the human family and its Father above are injured and wronged—that we claim for them from society sympathy and redress. We say nothing of the moral danger to which, in a metropolis like this, they are peculiarly exposed. When sin offers so golden a bait, it shows that those who yet continue at their work deserve respect and aid. If some of them have fallen—if some of them, driven by despair, have walked our streets to gain their bread, let us blame the system which has made so infamous and wretched a mode of life seem a change to be desired. Let the cure be adopted; let the work now done be distributed among a larger number of hands; and in this country, at least, there is no lack of persons eager to be employed. In many of the fashionable establishments increased cost of production can be of but little moment. Let employers learn to practise humanity, and let our high-born and in-

fluent ladies see to it that it is no thoughtlessness of theirs that compels their poorer sisters to toil with a sinking frame and a heavy heart. As a nation we have worked out one problem in civilization; we have shown that the utmost wealth can exist side by side with the deepest poverty—the grossest ignorance with the most cultivated knowledge—the most elevating piety with the most debasing fetichism—the fairest virtue with the most revolting vice. Be it our nobler work to show to the nations of the earth how, while our higher classes live in refinement and wealth, there is no class, however humble, but can joy in the possession of social happiness and rights.

But what, you ask, has this to do with Caldwell's? Only this, that of the class to which I have referred, I believe more may be found of an evening at Caldwell's than anywhere else in London. It is not all dressmakers who toil thus severely and unnaturally; and few of them are there who do not in the course of the year find time to pay Caldwell's a visit. Who has not heard of Caldwell's *Soirées Dansantes*? Are they not advertised in every paper? Are they not posted in

gigantic bills in every street? In quiet country lanes, miles and miles away from town, do we not come across the coloured letters by which Mr. Caldwell announces his entertainment to the world? Who is Mr. John Caldwell? We will let him speak for himself. He has an establishment in Dean-street, Soho. The building cost him nearly four thousand pounds. On Boxing-night he had as many as 600 customers, "and on average nights," he tells us, "I have about 200." The charge for admission is eightpence. Mr. Caldwell has a public-house just by, and from that supplies wine, and ale, and spirits. "I have never had a case of drunkenness in my place for years; I am very particular—I never let a drunken man remain." On an average about thirty glasses of spirits are drunk in the dancing-room in the course of an evening, and about forty glasses of beer. "I believe my place is carried on in as respectable a manner as can be. Some of the first noblemen come; there are some very respectable tradesmen round the neighbourhood, and a great many young people from the neighbourhood. The rooms are principally supported by the working classes. The

dancing-saloon opens at eight, and is closed at a quarter to twelve.” Such is the evidence given by Mr. Caldwell himself before the select committee of the House of Commons on public-houses. As is perfectly natural, it is all very rosy-coloured. The union of the first noblemen and the *élite* of the working classes over spirits-and-water, or in the mazy dance, is a beautiful specimen of fraternization, and the small quantity of beer and spirits drunk by 200 persons indicates an amount of sobriety rare in places of public amusement. I think Mr. Caldwell has a little understated the case. I fear he forgot to tell the committee that the drinking at his place was in the refreshment-room downstairs, not in the dancing-room above; while in the latter the small quantity he asserts is consumed, I am inclined to think much more may be disposed of downstairs. In the course of his own examination some disagreeable truths oozed out. We give a couple of questions and answers in proof of this.—Sir George Grey: “Do you mean to say that the dancing-saloon would have no sufficient attraction for the people unless there were connected with it the facility of obtaining spirituous

liquors?" " *I think not ; the people want a glass of wine, or negus, or brandy-and-water.*" Again, Mr. Caldwell has been unable to procure a licence on account of the opposition of the publicans in the neighbourhood. The Chairman asks, " Do you think the publicans would withdraw their opposition?" " *Yes, they begin to find my house an advantage ; when parties leave my rooms, they stand together at the corner of the streets, and say, We will have a parting glass. They do not all have it at my rooms.*"

Now this answer does not well coincide with Mr. Caldwell's former evidence. It is quite as much the drink as the dancing that is the attraction, and as to his respectable tradesmen, and the fact of persons not being tipsy, and that of some of the first noblemen coming there, all these assertions are fairly open to criticism. It was only the other day I heard a London magistrate declare that publicans never could tell when a person was tipsy ; and as to respectability, your Robsons, and Camerons, and Sadleirs are always considered highly respectable. Ask the first person you meet about your neighbours. What is the answer? Oh, they

are a highly respectable family ; they are immensely rich. And as to noblemen coming into such places, I imagine that would be precisely the reason why the judicious father of a pretty girl would prefer her dancing anywhere rather than in Mr. Caldwell's establishment in Dean-street. I have not much faith in the benefits of that species of the mixture of all ranks. Like the Irishman's reciprocity, it is all on one side. Tennyson makes his hero tell Lady Clara Vere de Vere—

“ At me you smiled, but unbeguiled
I saw the snare and I retired,—
The daughter of a hundred earls,
You are not one to be desired.”

But perchance a young maiden, led away by the excitement of the hour, could not find it in her heart to address similar language to Lady Clara Vere de Vere's brother. The last victim always believes that she is to be the exception to all general rules ; she may transgress, but not pay the penalty—pluck the forbidden fruit, and for doing so not forfeit Eden—plunge wildly into sin and sorrow and shame, and yet find peace in her heart and the light of heaven lying on her path ; but cause and

effect are eternal, and youth gone, and pleasure gone, and the power to attract gone, and the inward sense of right succeeded by the stings of conscience and the gnawing of remorse, what is left but to weep madly and in vain for

“The tender grace of a day that is dead”?

But we are in Caldwell's,—let us go into the gallery and look down. I know not the name of the new dances, but how the women swim round the room, as the music now hurriedly hastens, now softly dies away! The girl that dances here so modestly to-night in twelve months will have lost her maiden shame, will be dressed in silks and satins, will be dancing at the Argyll, and supping at Scott's or Quin's. That girl they call Rose—and a rose she is, for she might shine in a Belgravian drawing-room, and walk in beauty as a fairy queen—might have lit up a home with her love, and made a brave heart proud; but here she comes, night after night, and domestic life is to her tame after music and dancing such as she has here. Beauty you will not find much of, nor that overdress which stamps the character of the women at

the Casino or the Argyle in unmistakeable terms; and the men are the class you usually meet in these places. They may be pickpockets, or they may be peers; you can scarce tell the difference in these levelling days. If I had not Mr. Caldwell's express assertion to the contrary, I should certainly say that that young fellow with a pint bottle of champagne in his hand was decidedly drunk,—at any rate, he has very much the appearance of a tipsy person; but the waiters seem to be of Mr. Caldwell's opinion, and are still offering him more drink, and the women around seem to think it is rather fun than otherwise. Ah! little do they reflect how such as he, under the influences of drink, forget the decencies of life, the claims of duty, forget even the common instincts of common humanity; so that the wife whom he has vowed to love, honour, and protect, is abandoned, and the home forsaken, for the orgies of the public-house. Do the women around us ever expect to be the wives of such, or have they, young and fair as many of them seem, learnt already that recklessness as to the future which robs life of all its glory and incarcerates the soul in a living grave? But I need not continue my description; dancing

in public rooms in the metropolis is much the same everywhere. Of course the place is all that Mr. Caldwell says it is. I believe with him that it is as respectably conducted as establishments of the kind can be ; but at the same time Mr. Caldwell confesses it leads to drinking, and that is quite reason enough, independently of other obvious considerations, why I come away thankful that no wife or sister of mine is amongst the parties nightly to be met at Mr. Caldwell's *soirées dansantes*.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE STRAND AS IT WAS.

AS you walk along the Strand any time in the afternoon and evening, have you not seen (to our shame be it said) a sight not visible in the chief thoroughfare of any other capital in Europe? The sight I allude to is that of girls, whose profession is but too evident from their appearance, stopping almost every man they meet, mildly perhaps in the early part of the evening—but under the influence of drink, with greater rudeness and freedom as the night wears on. These girls, as you observe, are dressed in finery hired for the purpose; and following them, as a hawk its prey, you will perceive at a respectful distance old hags, mostly Jewesses, whose business it is to see that these girls do not escape with their fine dresses, and that they are active in their efforts to do business and entrap young men. Many of these women till

recently lived in this neighbourhood. What a filthy trade the Jews and Jewesses of London drive ! You may go into elysiums, and wine-rooms, and saloons, and you will find them belonging to Jews—the waiters Jews—the wine, the women, the cigars, all in the hands of Jews—true to their ancient vocation of “spoiling the Egyptians.” Let me not be understood as joining in vulgar prejudices against the Jews. Without reading “Coningsby,” or “Lord George Bentinck, a Political Biography,” I am ready to confess that there have been, and still are, great and gifted men born to the Jewish race ; but I am speaking of the vile crew who earn an infamous livelihood by pandering to all that is degraded in man or woman—whose vulture eyes follow you up and down, and who, if they could, would rob you of your last farthing, and tear off from your back your last rag, and who rear the prostitutes, and trade in flesh and blood. At one time the Strand and its neighbouring streets and courts were selected by such as fitting places for operation.

A very fleeting population is here. You do not see the same female faces many years. They commence life early. Few of them are supposed to last more

than eight years ; and if you see them in the day-time, before they are painted and dressed up—with their red eyes and bloated faces, you will think few of them will last even that short time ; but they pass on one by one to the spirit land, not as did Antigone, conscious of duty done, though wailing her unwedded state, nor as Jephtha's high-souled daughter, for whom Hebrew maidens devoutly wept—but with body and soul alike loathsome and steeped in sin. The gay women, as they are termed, are worse off than American slaves, and the men at the best are but drunken fools frittering away time and money and health, and rooting out from their hearts all traces of innocence that may be yet lingering there. The West is the more fashionable quarter, and no loose woman of any pretension to respectability, under ordinary circumstances, comes near Temple-bar.

Catherine-street is a busy place by day (it does a great business in the newspaper line, and about four or five in the afternoon it is used by the acute newsboys of the metropolis as a kind of 'Change), but it was busier far by night, and the later the hour the more active and lively it grew.

Consule Planco, as Mr. Thackeray would write, in the hot youth of the Regency, before George IV. had become prematurely used up, and a moral people had erected a statue to the memory of the most dissolute king in Christendom, as a lesson for England's ingenuous youth and as an example for future royal princes, Catherine-street was gay indeed, if wine and profligacy in the lowest and worst reality of forms are ever gay. Up and down Catherine-street what wretchedness masked in smiles has walked—what sin in satin—what devilish craft and brutal lust, ay, and what is worse than all, what unavailing repentance and regret!

At one time almost every house in Catherine-street was a public-house, or something worse. Here was a free-and-easy after the theatres were over; there a lounge open all night for the entertainment of bullies and prostitutes, and pickpockets and thieves, greenhorns from the country or London-born; here a dancing-saloon, which we were told in the advertisement no visitor should leave London without first seeing, and there a coffee-house where, when expelled from gayer places of resort, half-intoxicated men and

women took an early breakfast. All round you are bitter memories. Every stone you tread is red with blood; you can almost hear the last dying shriek of virtue, before, by means of the tempting purse or the hocused draught, the poor victim—feeblener in her struggles every hour—was lost for ever. Yet the gas burnt brightly by night, and there was dancing, and wine, and songs, and in the small hours you might have heard a hollow laughter, sadder even than cries and tears. Think what years and years of tedious culture must have elapsed to produce this concentrated essence of vice. How many must have died in the seasoning—how many must have turned back shuddering as they saw the dark ending to their infatuated career—how many weeping parents must have won back to decency and the observance of moral and social law—how many their want of pecuniary means must have compelled into a reluctant abstinence! Such a crop could only be reared, and slowly, in such a rich and licentious capital as ours. That landlord, gloating over his ill-gotten gains, could not have sunk into so fallen a condition rapidly. It must have taken years to make him what

he was. There was no excuse for him, and he knew it. It was not for the honest refreshment of the weary or the *bond fide* accommodation of the public that his house was open. The men around were there for immoral purposes ; the women were on the same bad errand, and that they might better pursue their vocation, there they came and drank ; but he sold his poison, thinking not of the mischief it would do, but of the gain it would bring. Was he not a degraded man, with his double chin, and dirty face, and low forehead ? could you see in him one trace of benevolence or humanity ? Do you doubt this ?—Had you spent your last farthing at his bar pawned every article of clothing you had, and gone with an empty pocket and in rags, and you would soon have been ordered to the door. See him now turning out that wretched creature. He allowed her to drink till she had no more money ; but she solicited chance customers, and they treated her to gin, and so the landlord let her stop ; but she got so drunk as to interfere with his business, and he turned her houseless and friendless out into the streets. Let us watch her. She is too far gone to have any decency left. Drink and sadness combined

have tortured her brain to madness. Her curses fill the air; a crowd collects; the police come up; she is borne on a stretcher to Bow-street, and in the morning is dismissed with a reprimand, or sentenced to a month's imprisonment, as the sitting magistrate is in a good temper or the reverse.

In some caricatures published when the writer was a lad, he remembers to have seen the "gentleman in black" represented as

"Sporting his horns and swinging tail
At Mother H.'s rites infernal."

Mother H.'s ran its career before the existence at any rate of the present generation. It was a night-house opposite the front entrance to Drury-lane theatre. Mother H., or Mrs. Hoskins, was the *remanet* of Mr. Hoskins, who had left his country for his country's good. She was a very ugly woman, painted and dressed in the highest style of fashion, with jewellery of course in profusion. She was, as can well be imagined, artful, deceitful, and dishonest. "I remember," says Nicholson, "a half-drunken, foolish fellow dropping a handful of sovereigns in the large supper-room. A number of the fair and frail

were present ; but Mrs. H. said, ‘ Now, stand away, girls ; I’ll pick them up, and see that the gentleman ain’t robbed.’ She should have added, by any one but herself ; for almost every sovereign she took from the floor she stowed away in her shoes. ‘ Well,’ said one of the women present, ‘ I don’t blame you, Mother, but I should like to stand in your shoes.’ ”

H.’s formerly extended from Brydges-street through to Wellington-street—Princes-street, as it was then called. The grand room was the full length of both houses. In a bath attached to the place a gentleman on one occasion had been found dead. He had been seen in the upper room with a large sum of money. When discovered he had only eighteenpence in his pocket. On the inquest evidence was adduced to show that he had accidentally fallen into the bath, and been drowned.

In Maiden-lane, where a hair-dresser had a son born to him, who, under the name of Turner, won his way to the first rank amongst English painters,—where Voltaire, “ so witty, profligate, and thin,” lodged at the house of a French peruke-maker, and corresponded with Swift, and Pope, and the other literary men of the times,—where Fielding laid the

foundation of an eternal fame,—where Andrew Marvell refused courtly bribes, and in sublime poverty proudly picked his mutton-bone: there, some long time since, stood a mansion, the residence, in a green old age, of that Nell Gwynne of whom, why I know not, the world speaks as kindly as if she were a Grace Darling, or a Florence Nightingale, or a Margaret Fuller, or an Elizabeth Fry. A portion of the old house still remains, with its ancient wainscoting. Well, on the site of this mansion was the Cider Cellars, the oldest house of its class in London, actually referred to in a rare pamphlet now extant in the British Museum, entitled “Adventures Underground in the Year 1750.” In those days to drink deep was deemed a virtue, and the literary class, after the exhausting labours of the day, loved nothing better than to sit soaking all night in the Cider Cellars, where all restraints were thrown on one side,—where the song was sung and the wine was quaffed, and men were fools enough to think they were getting happy when they were only getting drunk. I can understand why the wits went to the Cider Cellars then. Few of them lived in a style in which they would like to

receive their friends. In a place like the Cider Cellars they could meet after the theatres were closed, and the occupations of the day over, and sup and talk and drink with more freedom than in any private house; and no doubt many were the ingenuous youths who went there to see the learned Mr. Bayle, or the great Grecian Porson, or the eminent tragedian Mr. Edmund Kean, and thought it a fine thing to view those distinguished men maudlin or obscene or blasphemous over their cups. But the wits do not go to the Cider Cellars now. Even the men about town do not go there. I remember when that dismal song, "Sam Hall," was sung—a song in which a wretch is supposed to utter all the wretchedness in his soul, all his sickness of life, all his abhorrence of mankind, as he was on his way to Tyburn drop. Horrible as the song was—revolting as it was to all but *blasé* men, the room was crammed to suffocation,—it was impossible often to get a seat, and such was the rapt attention, you might have heard a pin drop. Where are the crowds that listened to that song? Most of them, I fear, if alive, are all the worse off in heart and pocket and hope.

Let me give one more memory connected with this locality. A few years since, about the time when the first edition of this work was passing through the press, had you been walking down Brydges-street or the Strand, late on Saturday night or early on a Sunday morning, on a doorstep, in spite of the pouring rain, you might have seen a woman, in her rags and loneliness, trying to gather a few hours of sleep. She was too weak to pursue her unhallowed calling, and had she been so disposed on that cold, wet night, it would have been of little avail had she walked the streets. The policeman as he goes his monotonous rounds tells her to move on. She wakes up, gets upon her legs, hobbles along, and then, when he is past, again, weary and wayworn, seeks the friendly doorstep. The policeman returns; "What, here still?" he exclaims. Ah yes! she has not power to move away. She is weak, ill, dying. The friendly police carry her to the neighbouring hospital. "She cannot be received here," says Routine, and she is taken to the workhouse. Again she is taken to the hospital, admitted at last—for is she not a woman, and a young one, too?—not more

than twenty-five, it appears,—and on the face, stained with intemperance and sin, is visible the dread stamp of death—in this case, perhaps a welcome messenger; for who would live fallen, friendless, forsaken, with a diseased body and a broken heart? “The spirit of a man can sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?” Peace be with her! in another hour or two she will have done with this wretched life of hers, and have gone where “the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.” More than usual official cruelty was visible in this case, for all that was given her between her admission and her death was a simple cup of tea; and the coroner’s verdict very properly censured the hospital authorities. Well, what connexion, you ask, is there with this girl’s sad fate and the jollity of the Cider Cellars? Only this, that her father made the Cider Cellars so popular a place of resort. Seated there, I could not but think of this poor girl, who began life as the daughter of a successful publican, who had been governess in a nobleman’s family, at the early age of twenty-five rescued from the streets by policemen, and dependent on charity for a bed on which to die. In the foaming cup, in the sparkle of the gas, while

the comic singer was most comical, or the sentimental singer most sentimental, I could not be oblivious of her fate. Was there not poison in the bowl? Was there not madness in the merriment? To the night so bright did there not come a dolo-ous morrow? Rash boy, you may sing and laugh the hours away, quaffing the rich red wine, or from wily beauty drinking in a still more dangerous intoxication. Thus you may blaze for a while, but you must pay the reckoning, and then, I imagine, you will doubt whether the amusement was worth the price.

Let me ask, need the amusements of our leisure hours be thus based on false principles? Cambridge, in one of the pleasantest papers in the "World," says, "Among the numbers who have changed a sober plan of living for one of riot and excess, the greater part have been converted by the arguments in a drinking song." Life is a battle-ground which requires heart and muscle, and where only the brave can conquer; but if I drop for half an hour into a music-hall, I learn that pleasure is the great aim of life, and that gin can make me jolly and a genius.

Leigh Hunt, Barry Cornwall, and the *Times* are

all eloquent in the praise of alcohol. It lifts us above this dull earth, it fires our genius, it gives to us the large utterances of the gods. Barry Cornwall tells us—

“Bad are the times
And bad the rhymes
That scorn old wine.”

Leigh Hunt translates “Bacchus in Tuscany,” and sanctions such lines as the following—

“I would sooner take to poison
Than a single cup set eyes on
Of that bitter and guilty stuff ye
Talk of by the name of coffee;”

and the *Times* everywhere inculcates the idea that, without wine, poetry and eloquence and wit were dumb and dead. Was Sydney Smith witty? was Shelley a poet? or was he who in old times drew away the Hebrew multitude from the crowded streets of Jerusalem out into the desert, whose food was locusts and wild honey, whose raiment was a leathern girdle—was he not eloquent, as he warned the terror-stricken mob that hung upon his lips of the wrath to come? Facts are not in favour of the wine-drinkers. Of Waller Dr. Johnson writes, “In

a time when fancy and gaiety were the most powerful recommendations to regard, it is not likely that Waller was forgotten. He passed his time in the company that was highest both in rank and wit, from which even his obstinate sobriety did not exclude him. Though he drank water, he was enabled by his fertility of mind to heighten the mirth of Bacchanalian assemblies; and Mr. Saville said that ‘no man in England should keep him company without drinking, but Ned Waller.’ ” “In Parliament,” says Burnet, “he was the delight of the House, and, though old, said the liveliest things of any of them.”

CHAPTER XIV.

THE POLICE-COURT

IS an attractive lounge to the seedy, the disreputable, the unwashed. Evidently it is a grand and refreshing and popular sight to see justice doled out in small parcels—to see the righteous flourish, and the wicked put to shame. I fear, however, it is a feeling of a more personal nature that is the chief attraction, after all. Jones goes to see what a mess Davis gets into; Smithes to see if Scroggins keeps “mum” like a brick; the many, to retail a little scandal at the expense of their neighbours,—if at the expense of a friend, of course so much the better. A little before ten a crowd is ranged round the police-office, waiting to see the prisoners, who have been locked up all night, marched into the court, which generally commences its operations at ten.

The court itself offers very little accommodation to the most thinking public. At one end of the room is the presiding magistrate; below him is the clerk; on the right of the magistrate is the box for complainant and witnesses. Opposite him is the dock in which the defendant is placed: behind some boards, over which only tall people can see, is the public; and on the magistrate's right are the reporters—or rather, the penny-a-liners—who write on “flimsy,” and leave “copy” on spec at all the daily paper offices. Let me say a word about these exceedingly seedy-looking individuals connected with the fourth estate. That they are not better dressed is, I take it, their own fault, and arises from that daring defiance of conventionalism which is so great a characteristic of the lower orders of gentlemen connected with the press. Let me say, *en passant*, the public owe these men much. It is they who labour with a perseverance worthy of a better cause, and that deserves to be successful, to describe the cases heard in the police-courts in the most racy and tempting terms. In their peculiar phraseology, every bachelor who gets into a scrape is a gay Lothario, and

every young woman that appeals to justice is lady-like in manners and interesting in appearance. The poor wretch that crawls along the street, all rouged and decked out in finery not her own, is “a dashing Cyprian.” Every Irishman is described as “a native of the Green Isle:” every man in a red coat, “a brave son of Mars;” every sailor, “a jolly tar;” and a man with a little hair on his chin, or under it, is invariably “bearded like the pard;” and if anything causing a smile occurs,—and sometimes on the gravest occasions justice will even grin,—the court is, so they always put it, convulsed with laughter. Knights of the pen, a police-case loving-to-read public should be grateful to you! By the side of the reporters often sit some three or four of those mischief-makers, pettifogging attorneys; men who, in their own opinion, only require a clear stage and no favour, and the mere formality of a call to the bar, to rival, if not surpass, the fame of a Scarlett, or a Brougham, or a Lyndhurst, or an Erskine, or even of a Coke himself; and truly if to bully, to suppress what is true and insinuate what is false—if to gloss over the injustice done by a client, and to

proclaim aloud that of the opposite party—if to speak in an emphatic manner and at a most unmerciful length—if to browbeat witnesses, mislead the court, and astonish the weak nerves of their hearers, constitute a fitness for legal greatness, these gentlemen have only to enter their names at any of the Inns of Court, and eat the requisite number of dinners, to win at once undying reputation. At the dock appears the trembling culprit, guarded sedulously by the police, who quietly assume his or her guilt, and do all they can in endeavouring to make out a case,—occasionally going so far in their zeal as to state things not exactly true, the *esprit de corps* of course leading them to aid each other whenever they have a chance.

In a low neighbourhood the principal cases heard are those arising from intoxication. On this particular morning we will suppose the court opens with what is very common, an assault case between two Irish families who were hereditary foes, and who, emigrating, or rather, like Æneas, “driven by fate,” from the mother country at the same time, locate, unfortunately for themselves, in

the same neighbourhood,—and who, in accordance with the well-known remark of Horace, continue in St. Giles's the amicable quarrels of Tipperary, to the amusement of a congenial neighbourhood, which likes a good fight rather than not, but to the intense terror and annoyance of all such of her Majesty's lieges as are well disposed. As generally happens, the case, after a considerable amount of hard swearing on both sides, is dismissed, leaving to each party the inestimable privilege of paying costs. This case creates great interest; complainants and defendants are well-known performers, and the mob comes to see them as people go to see a favourite actor on the stage. When it terminates, the Guelphs and Ghibellines leave the court to discuss the oft-told tale in the nearest public-house. The remaining cases are those of sailors and navvies charged with being drunk and disorderly, of robberies committed by prostitutes when their victims were stupefied by beer, and of ragged urchins with precocious developments, the head and front of whose offending was that they "heaved" stones, or that they declined to "move on" when particularly requested to do so by

the police. Poor little outcasts, they are better off in gaol than on the streets; and they know it, and own to an astonishing number of convictions, and gladly look forward to the time when they shall be able to achieve greater enormities and manlier offences against law. These cases are soon disposed of; in the majority the magistrate hears the complaint, and simply tells the little urchin he "may go down." But let us not leave yet. This is a publican, and he has a charge against this decent-looking woman,—she is not a drunkard;—let us listen.

"Call Phil Bird," says the superintendent.

As Phil Bird is in court, there is no need to call him, but he is called in stentorian tones nevertheless. Policemen, like other men, love to hear the sound of their own voices. Phil immediately steps into the witness-box. That he is a favourite with the beer-drinking public around is clear as soon as he kisses the Bible, and promises — a promise lightly made, and lightly broken—to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, "so help me God."

“Well, Bird,” says the magistrate, “will you state your complaint?”

“Certainly, your honour,” is the reply, “I was in my shop on Saturday, when that woman (pointing to the trembling female in the dock) came in kicking up a row, and asking for her husband. Well, she spoke to her husband, and wanted to get him away, but her husband did not choose to go; and as she would not leave quietly I was obliged to go and speak to her, upon which she turned round, abusing me, saying I had robbed her of her husband, that I had got his money, and kept making a great many remarks which I was not going to submit to, especially as she had got quite a crowd of people together, and it was interfering with my business; so I called in Policeman Brown, and gave her in charge.”

Policeman Brown corroborates the testimony. He has yet to win his spurs, and is glad of an opportunity of distinguishing himself; besides, he has drunk too much of Phil Bird’s fine sparkling ales to refuse to do him a little friendly turn when he has a chance.

“Mr. Bird’s house is a well-conducted house, I

believe, Mr. Sergeant?" says the magistrate, more from habit than with any view of eliciting information.

"Good, your worship," is the answer; "impossible to be better." The official perhaps has received a small cask of Devonshire cider, as a mark of private friendship and personal esteem, from the complainant, and this might, though I would fain hope not—but flesh is grass, and a sergeant of police is but flesh after all—have influenced the nature of his reply. This is the more probable, as one bystander whispers to another that he believes Phil Bird's is the worst house in the street, a remark which seems to excite the cordial approbation of the party to whom it is addressed—a remark also which the sergeant hears, and which leads him to cry "silence" in his loudest voice and sternest manner. The whisperer is cowed at once.

Phil Bird looks gratefully at the sergeant; the latter is grateful in O'Connell's sense, and has a lively sense of favours to come.

"And the woman, what about her?" asks the magistrate.

"I believe generally she's very well behaved,"

says Policeman Brown, as if on the present occasion she had been guilty of an enormous offence.

“Do you know anything against her?”

“Not as I know of, yer worship.”

“Well,” says the magistrate, addressing the poor washerwoman, nervous and “all of a tremble,” as she afterwards confidentially informs a friend, looking as if she expected immediate sentence of death passed upon her, “what do you say to the charge? Mr. Bird says you went and created a disturbance in his shop; now you had no business to do that, you know.”

“I know I hadn’t, sir,” said the poor woman; but here she burst into tears.

Had she been alone with the magistrate, who is a kind-hearted man, and wishes to do what is right, she would soon have found her tongue, and her warm appeal, told with natural eloquence because told out of a full heart, would soon have reached his own; but she is frightened—her energies are paralysed,—she cannot speak at all.

“Oh, Brown,” says the magistrate, as if a bright thought struck him, “was the woman sober?”

“ Well, I can’t swear that she was drunk,” said Brown, reluctantly.

This by no means helps to soothe the poor woman’s nerves, but it drives her to speak in her own behalf.

“ Your worship,” she exclaims, “ I was as sober as you are now,”—she might have added, but she did not, and a good deal more sober than Policeman Brown. “ I did go to Phil Bird’s, but it was to fetch my husband out, who had been inveigled in there, and had been led into spending all the money he had, and getting drunk.”

“ Well, my good woman, the publican must be protected. You should not have created a disturbance. I sha’n’t inflict a fine, but you must pay the costs. You may go down.”

And so the time of the magistrate is taken up. Not one case out of ten comes to anything ; but the officiousness of the police is shown, the lazy and good-for-nothing part of the public have a gratuitous entertainment provided for them, and the criminal class get an initiation into the secrets of the law which robs it of its terrors, as in such matters it is especially true, familiarity breeds

contempt. Most of the lads and girls—especially the latter—placed at the bar, rather seem to like the excitement, and go before the bench in their best clothes and with their best looks, as they go to the gallery of the Victoria or the Sunday tea-garden.

CHAPTER XV.

UP THE HAYMARKET.

IF I attend an Evangelical church, I find that in England alone of the nations of the earth we have the pure light of Christian truth. If I take up the reports of our various religious societies, I find we are spending an enormous sum in sending the Gospel into foreign parts. I don't say but what this is praiseworthy—Indians, Turks, Jews, Assyrians, bond and free, are they not all children of one common Father with ourselves? But let us not overlook, after all, the claims of home. I do not speak now of the lowest classes—of the refuse and outcasts of our towns, of the Pariahs of our civilization—I speak of the heathens in satin and broadcloth, of the vice that wears patent leather boots and the best French kid, of the intemperance that feasts at rich men's tables, and that is born of hock, and claret, and champagne.

But what has all this to do with the Haymarket? Wait awhile, and your curiosity will be satisfied. It is daytime, and we will stroll up thither. There is nothing peculiar about the place, except the unusual number of gin-palaces, hotels, French restaurants, oyster-shops, coffee-houses with the blinds drawn, as if to show they did not care to do business, and the general sleepy appearance of the waiters. There is a cab-stand seemingly inclined to shut up shop, and if it were not for the omnibuses there would be but few indications of life. On the right-hand side as you go from Pall Mall there are most respectable shops, but the wonder to me is how they manage to attract custom sufficient to enable them to pay what must be their very heavy rents. At the top of the Haymarket we find the street from Leicester-square to Piccadilly always full of traffic, and all about are the oyster-shops, and Turkish divans and cafés, all quiet enough now, but at the witching hour of night destined to be filled to suffocation with fast men and flash women, with old hags with fruit and flowers and oranges, male vendors of pencils and knives, policemen and bullies, fools and rogues.

Let us skip over a short interval of time, and suppose the neighbouring church bells to have chimed the midnight hour. A few steps take us to the Argyle. We take our stand with a crowd just opposite a building with an entrance lighted with gas, which we learn to be a handsome casino—one of the handsomest in London—devoted to dancing and drinking. The hour of closing has arrived, and the votaries of pleasure, as it is called, are leaving. There are an immense number of women, all splendidly dressed—from the young girl who has not yet learnt the bitterness of the life she has ventured on, to the woman thoroughly dead to all feeling, all modesty and shame. It is a sad sight, though few see the snake in the grass for the flowers; and of the gay ones there none think they will ever become like the bloated, ragged women now standing in their path and asking with the true professional whine for alms. Some are borne away in broughams, some in cabs, but the most are on foot, and are quite willing to admit the advances of any well-dressed stranger. Let us now look at the men. You cannot see a finer set anywhere. Are not the flower of our youth and

manhood there? Of course I refer merely to their physical formation. Young fellows from the army and navy, men from all our universities and inns of court, gents from the City and Stock Exchange, and respectable middle-aged country gentlemen stopping in town a night, and just dropping in to see what is going on. Before us there is enough material to found a mighty empire, including even that pale melancholy little lordling dashing along in his cab, who has already, boy as he is, a regiment; and all this multitude is going headlong to the devil at express speed, in spite of the baptismal vow and the ministrations of the church. But let us see what they are about. Here a portion seeks supper at the neighbouring oyster-rooms, and a rush is made at the waiters as they bring in oysters and pale ale, as if the parties had been famishing all day. Suppers in the Haymarket are rather costly. For instance, a little while ago in the City Sheriffs' Court, before Mr. Kerr, an action was brought to recover the price of a little supper in the Haymarket, 11*l.* 2*s.* Mr. Barnard, for the plaintiff, said his client kept a refreshment room in the Haymarket, and defendant was an architect

and surveyor. Upon a certain evening defendant, an ex-pugilist, and some friends sat down to supper. They had supper, champagne, cigars, pale ale, lemonade, soda water, &c., and the bill came to 11*l.* 2*s.*, including a sum of 5*l.* which Mr. Belasco lent defendant, as the party had no money. Wilson, one of the waiters at Belasco's, was called, and said he recollected the night of the supper. There were the defendant, Mr. Henry Broome, and four ladies. His Honour: Ladies? (a laugh). Witness: Well, women. They had supper. Mr. Barnard: The price of a supper in the Haymarket is 5*s.* a-piece, is it not? Witness: That is according to what you have (laughter). Some of the ladies had soup (laughter). They had champagne, spirits and water, and lemonade. Mr. Belasco was called, and deposed to lending the defendant 5*l.* His Honour: Now you have not proved the cigars, 6*s.* Plaintiff: They had twelve cigars. Mr. Barnard: Did the ladies smoke? (laughter). Plaintiff: No, but Mr. Broome did. Sixpence apiece is a very reasonable charge for cigars in the Haymarket. His Honour: This is an undefended case, gentlemen, and you will find for the plaintiff. Verdict

for the plaintiff. Mr. Barnard: I am instructed to apply for a certificate. Your Honour thinks this is a fit case to be tried in a superior court? His Honour: Oh yes. It is right we should know how things go on in the world (laughter).” I have heard, and I dare say so has his Honour, of suppers in that neighbourhood more costly. I have heard of suppers in a room not far off, where the expenses have been something frightful. Men who cannot pay their debts, who become bankrupts, squander at such places, wantonly and wickedly, money which is not theirs. They get off easy when they appear in Basinghall-street. No indignant commissioner hits them hard. The terrors of the law are for honest men. Some people may doubt whether this be right, but on the ethics of the question I give no opinion.

In the case of Lyons *versus* Samuel Instone we have another revelation of Haymarket life. The action was for money lent. The plaintiff kept a cigar-shop and restaurant in Panton-street, Haymarket, and defendant was a man of some property, over fifty years of age. The plaintiff’s statement,

which was corroborated by others, was, that on the 18th of July last he came to her house at four o'clock in the morning saying he had been robbed ; he was rather tipsy. Next morning," she continued, " he asked me for some money and I gave him 7*l*. I had in the house ; he invited me to Gravesend with another lady, and there every shilling of the 7*l*. was spent. We went driving about, and gave money away to waiters, porters, and cabmen. We came home then. We had supper in the Haymarket, and he met some women and invited them, and they had supper too. The supper came to 3*l*. I had to give him my watch, which he left as security, and next day I redeemed it." The next day the party, with the addition of a Mrs. James, proceeded to Margate, where they spent in two days and nights 10*l*., for which Mrs. Lyons paid by again pawning her watch and chain. The day after they returned we find them assisting at a Woolwich fête, where 7*l*. was spent, which this ever-ready Mrs. Lyons had to pay. The evidence of Mrs. Lyons' porter may be taken as a graphic sketch of the unutterable idiocy of Haymarket life. A porter said, "The defendant was well known in the Hay-

market. One night in July last he came up in a bad state, and he said, ‘Bill, look here, they have been serving me so bad—knocking me about. Where is mother?’ ‘Who do you mean?’ says I. ‘Why, Sal,’ says he, and in he rushed. He had no coat on, and his ring was gone, and his waistcoat was split, and his hat was gone, and his sleeve was hanging down, and his nose was bleeding. He said something about having something, and that he had no money to pay for it, and so they kicked him out. ‘Feel my head, Bill,’ said he. So I felt his head and there were several lumps. He wanted to get on a coat and hat, and to go and look after them and give them a good thrashing: so he got his face washed and got on a hat and Mrs. Lyons’ sealskin jacket, and he got in a cab and I got on the box, but we could not find them. It was after hours, you see.”

The Haymarket has always been the haunt of abandoned men and abandoned women. It was here that Johnson’s friend Barretti committed the fatal assault for which he was tried at the Old Bailey and acquitted. It appears that having been accosted by a woman of the town he roughly re-

fused her advances ; immediately he was attacked by some of her male confederates, and in the scuffle he stuck one of them with his pocket-knife. On this the man pursued and collared him, when Barretti, a foreigner and alone, very naturally became still more alarmed, and, to free himself, repeatedly stabbed the man, who unfortunately died of his wounds the next day. At the trial, Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, Garrick, Reynolds, and Beauclerk, bore testimony to his good character, and although he did not escape censure for too readily resorting to the knife, his acquittal was generally approved.

But a very few years back the place was a sink of abomination. No city in Europe, nor Hottentot settlement, had anything to show more disgusting or depraved. In one house was a back room much patronized by a certain marquis, and which till recently bore his name. In another assembled the ladies of the Windham set. In another you would find more of the lower class of prostitutes, and the thieves and rogues with whom they cohabited. For half a sovereign you could easily find here some one ready to punch a policeman in the head in case of

a row. In some of the side streets there were houses where you could call for anything you liked at prohibited hours. Then there was the Piccadilly saloon, at one time the most riotous and outrageous of all the infamous dens in the district. You knocked at a door, the glare of the gas of which indicated that there was something going on, though the cold fowl in the window and the cigar-shop close by, scarcely indicated what. Having paid for admission, you passed through a narrow passage, and found yourself in a large saloon with a balcony all round. On the ground floor of course there was dancing, with a bar at the end for the sale of drink. Up in the balcony were young fellows sitting with gaily-dressed women, drinking sherry cobbler and smoking cigars. Behind them was a supper-room. Late in the night, or rather early in the morning, the crowd was very great, and every one was more or less under the influence of liquor. Though you could often scarce see for the smoke, and hear on account of the universal uproar, it was not difficult to perceive in the hilarity of some, in the bad temper of others, in the stupidity of most, and in the foul language

of all, that the drink was producing its legitimate effect. You might be sure to see this rouged girl in satin in a little while lying on the stone pavement with an unmeaning grin, till she is walked off or carried off by the police to the nearest station. You might be sure that fine manly lad out to-night to see life would have to sleep where his mother, praying for him, even in her dreams little imagined. *She* would not have sunk so low, *he* would not have blasted a mother's hopes, had it not been for drink. As you went out into the summer air, what a crowd there was, all looking pale and seedy and dirty in the clear light of the early morn; swells who had dropped in from an evening party; women who had been in full undress to the theatre; clerks and lads who had been up so late that, in spite of pale face and blinking eyes, they thought it was not worth while going to bed at all! What damage had the night's riot not inflicted on dress shirts and gentlemen's hats! What kept them out all night? What made them what they were but drink? The small hours came and went, yet the place was still redolent with life. Young fellows were singing "We won't go home

till morning ;” policemen were bidding the unfortunates who would not bribe them move on, and keeping very sharp eyes on such publicans and sinners as were so rash as not to attempt to make things pleasant. Hideous females of ancient birth were waiting to rob the drunkards they might meet in their path ; and men with hawk eyes and hungry aspect were hovering all round like so many birds of prey ; and boys—for they are everywhere, all dirt and rags, yet happy in the richness of young life, for childhood, even the most abandoned, can never be sad—danced round, in the hope that “ your honour ” would find a copper for “ poor little Jack,” singing of that far-famed Ratcatcher’s Daughter, who

“ Didn’t live in Vestministere,
But the t’other side of the vatere.”

Well, I’d rather be one of them than the proprietress of that house, with the gas-lamp over the door, who by this time has been borne by the Great Northern in a first-class carriage, side by side with senators, and city magistrates, and clergymen, and it may be your wife or mine, to her country

seat. We were standing in the very temple of vice—its ministers were all round us. Not one unholy appetite but could be gratified here; gamblers, bullies, blacklegs, prostitutes, surrounded you on every side. Here law, and order, and decency were all alike violated; in the prohibited hours, you could go into coffee-houses and get as much brandy as you liked. All signs of drinking utensils were easily removed when it was announced that the inspector was coming upstairs. Often would the stranger start at a moving mass of sores and dirt and rags. Possibly in that sad disguise was one who had been beautiful—had been courted for her beauty—had been richly-apparelled and sumptuously fed, but whom drink and bad company had reduced to what she was; what she would remain till she should be carried, unwept and unknown, to her pauper grave.

But the Haymarket is now reformed. Is it? I believe till 1 P.M. it is almost as bad as ever. There are there just the same highly-dressed women, just the same dissipated men and lads, as there were long, long ago; there are still houses at the doors of which there are little

wickets, through which the janitor inspects your person previous to admission. It may be that there is less drunkenness; it stands to reason that it should be so. It may be, also, that the police are a little sterner, and that they have less tenderness than ever for the poor wretch who, under the combined influences of drink and want, endeavours to attract the notice of the pedestrian. But life in the Haymarket is still what it ever was—a spectacle such as you can find nowhere else. Some of the women you may see here are fitted for something better than fast life. Some of them have risen in the world. As you meet them listening at Hatton-garden to Rossini's "Stabat Mater," or riding in Rotten-row, you could scarce fancy that they had ever been in the Haymarket at all.

But let us away from this moral dunghill. In a little while the life of the place is over. The police will retire—the young rakes and debauchees will go home to bed—the women will have to do the same—the oyster-shops and gin-palaces and cafés will be closed—the whole district will have a serious and quiet air, and bishops (very unlike the bishops of apostolic times) will ride through it in cushioned

carriages to consider how best the temporalities of the Church may be preserved ; or how best funds may be raised for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts. As you go up Regent-street you see the lamps being extinguished, and the milk-carts coming into town, and the sleepy newsboys going to get the early editions of the morning papers, and the green hills of Hampstead looking lovelier than ever. In the sober light of day your night in the Haymarket will seem unreal—a rough outline by Wiertz—nothing more, and when you repeat your experiences, very likely you will be told that your picture is over-drawn.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MUSIC-HALL.

“GIVE me the songs of the people, and you may make its laws,” said old Fletcher of Saltoun, with a knowledge of human nature which statesmen do not frequently possess. Necessity is a stern taskmaster; the workman in the factory, the clerk in the counting-house, and the shopman behind the counter, are generally compelled to stick pretty close to work, and to the eye of the observer present very much the same appearance. They come at certain hours, they go at certain hours, and perform their daily toil with a certain amount of effectiveness and skill. Very little credit is due to them for this—their livelihood depends upon their being diligent and active—and hence I know little of the individual by merely witnessing him toiling

for his daily bread. I must follow him home ; I must be with him in his hours of relaxation ; I must listen to the songs he sings and the jokes he attempts ; I must see what is his idea of pleasure, and thus only can I get at the man as he is. Even his church or chapel goings I cannot take as indications of his real nature. He may go because his parents go, because his master goes, because his friends go, because he has been trained to go, because society expects him to go, because it is for his worldly advantage that he goes, or for a hundred other reasons all equally vain ; but no man is a hypocrite where his pleasures are concerned. I can gather more about him from the way in which he spends his leisure hours than I can from his active employments of the day. They are poor miserable philosophers indeed, and guilty of an enormous blunder, who, in their investigation into the moral and social condition of the people, refuse to notice the amusements of the people in their hours of gaiety and ease. I make, then, no apology for introducing you to Canterbury Hall.

The Upper Marsh, Westminster-road, is what is called a low neighbourhood. It is not far from

Astley's Theatre. Right through it runs the South-Western Railway, and everywhere about it are planted pawnbrokers' shops, with an indescribable amount of dirty second-hand clothes, and monster gin-palaces, with unlimited plate-glass and gas. Go along there what hour of the day you will, these gin-palaces are full of ragged children, hideous old women, and drunken men. "The bane and the antidote," you may say, "are thus side by side." True, but you forget that youth in its search for pleasure is blind, and sees not the warning till it is too late; and of the hundreds rushing on to the Canterbury Hall for a quiet glass, none think they will fall so low as the victims of intemperance reeling, cursing, fighting, blaspheming, in their path. But let us pass on. A well-lighted entrance attached to a public-house indicates that we have reached our destination. We proceed up a few stairs, along a passage lined with handsome engravings and very fine pictures, to a bar, where we pay sixpence if we take a seat in the body of the hall, and ninepence if we are inclined to extravagance, and ascend into the balcony. We make our way leisurely along the floor of the building, which is really a very hand-

some hall, well lighted, and capable of holding fifteen hundred persons; the balcony extends round the room in the form of a horse-shoe. At the opposite end to which we enter is the platform, on which is placed a grand piano and a harmonium, on which the performers play in the intervals when the professional singers have left the stage. The chairman sits just beneath them. It is dull work to him; but there he must sit every night, smoking cigars and drinking, from seven till twelve o'clock. I fancy I detect a little touch of rouge just on the top of his cheek; he may well need it, for even on a fine summer night like this the room is crowded, and almost every gentleman present has a pipe or a cigar in his mouth. Let us look round us; evidently the majority present are respectable mechanics, or small tradesmen with their wives and daughters and sweethearts there. Now and then you see a midshipman, or a few fast clerks and warehousemen, who confidentially inform each other that there is "no end of talent here," and that Miss —— "is a doosed fine gal;" and here, as elsewhere, we see a few of the class of unfortunates, whose staring eyes would fain extort an admiration

which their persons do not justify. Every one is smoking, and every one has a glass before him ; but the class that come here are economical, and chiefly confine themselves to pipes and porter. The presence of the ladies has also a beneficial effect ; I see no indication of intoxication, and certainly none are outrageously shabby or ill-behaved. In the stalls and higher priced parts you see a class of men in a better position in life.

The “ Perfect Cure ” was a great attraction here at one time ; here also was the inimitable Mackney, who was here and there and everywhere in the course of the evening, and who drove about gaily from one music-hall to another. I was passing along Holborn one night, and opposite the door of the music-hall there was an immense crowd. I wondered what it was all about. I expected to find that either Lord Palmerston or the Bishop of London was to make his *début*. I asked, and was told they were waiting to see Mr. Mackney appear, and wonderful was their enthusiasm when their hero jumped into his brougham and drove away. Since his advent I have seen one comic singer driving about town in a carriage and four.

These places pay well: I am told the profits of the Canterbury Hall establishment are some thousand pounds a year. Not long ago the Mogul in wretched Drury-lane, was sold for 18,000*l.*, and the proprietor purchased the Metropolitan Music-hall for nearly 20,000*l.*; and has, I hear, every reason to be satisfied with his bargain. No wonder London abounds with music-halls; the more numerous they are the better they seem to pay. We have far more music-halls than theatres, and though some of them are confined almost exclusively to the working classes, it is clear the audience consists, as regards the generality, of fast men and women, who are disposed to pay very handsomely for their pleasures. In proof of which it may be remarked that the managers are gradually raising the prices of admission, that a larger part of the space is being converted into stalls, and that the British artisan is gradually driven away, and his place supplied by a very inferior but richer type of animal.

At these places the lowest doggerel is the most applauded: considering the fool the comic-singer makes of himself you can scarce fancy he is over-

paid. At one time he appears as a widow, at another as a fast man—a Champagne Charlie—whose whiskers are the delight of one sex and the envy of the other, and then he sings such stuff as the following:—

“I’m Fred Fitzfaddle Fitzurse Lollipop,
My style’s tiptop, some call me fop,
And I’ve my card with a crest at top,
And my motto is ‘La de dah!’
I was born and bred—and still live—west,
There dined and drest, and all the rest,
And tho’ I have many a time been press’d,
I have never passed Temple Bar.”

The favourite singer of the present day—a man who has really great power of acting—utters nightly such trash as this, to applaud which one would fancy an audience was but little removed from idiotcy:—

“Jamsetjee ma jabajehoy,
Jabbery dobi porie.
Ikey, Pikey, Sikey, Crikey,
Chillingowullabadorie!”

The following chorus at one time was rapturously applauded, and was to be heard nightly at the Canterbury:—

“Kemo, kimo, where? oh, there! my high, my low,
Then in came Sally singing,
Sometimes, Medley winkum lingtum nip cat.
Sing song, Polly, won't you try me, oh?”

A great source of amusement is the personification of the low cadger, of the London coster, of the country yokel who comes up to Lunnun

“The dodges for to see,”

or of the wild Irishman, who, dressed out in great-coat, red vest, ragged inexpressibles, and armed with a shillalah, and a shocking bad hat, jumps upon the stage with a roar, and an appearance on the whole strongly reminding you of the gorilla. These low performances are not the worst part of the nightly proceedings. Some of the songs are outrageously obscene and indecent, meant to be such by the singer, and accepted as such by the occupants, male and female, of the crowded benches. There are words of double meaning to which the expressive action, or sly leer of the singer, give no uncertain signification, which should be tolerated in no public assembly, even if that assembly consists of the lowest of prostitutes and the most degraded of their admirers. Of course all the proceedings

are not equally objectionable. There is good music in abundance ; ladies in splendid costume, gentlemen in full evening dress, at times render all our best songs in a manner worthy of them, and you may hear selections from the operas and all our favourite airs as well executed at the music-hall as anywhere else ; but surely more rational amusement might be found than is met with in such places. It can be good neither for soul nor body that a young man should frequent such places night after night, breathing an atmosphere laden with tobacco-smoke, drinking indescribable quantities of doubtful beverages, flirting with fallen women more showy in their getting up and more reckless in their expenditure than himself.

Let me imagine a very probable case. A young lad from the country comes to London. He has been steadily brought up, and at home under the care of his parents and friends has been preserved from the temptations incident to his age. He enters one of these places of amusement, at first perhaps with a little feeling of shame and a consciousness that his conduct is not exactly right nor such as would be approved of by his father and mother far away. The waiter asks him what he

will take, and of course brings him a glass of some compound more or less intoxicating. Under its treacherous influence, the character of the place in the estimation of the visitor completely alters. The splendid gas chandeliers and expensive fitting-up of the rooms make him feel that the amusements are of a respectable if not of an aristocratic character. The music is of an exciting kind, the dancing on the platform appeals to his youthful love of pleasure, the laughter of all around is infectious. He calls for another glass. He gets talkative and companionable. By the light of the gas he sees not how painted are the wretched women dressed in silks and satins, with hollow cheeks, and hands bedecked with imitation jewellery. Under the influence of liquor and music and bad company, the careful training of a home is undone, the advice of a father, the prayers of a mother, the admonitions of conscience are forgotten, and the lad, who perhaps has shuddered as he has read of the "young man void of understanding" led away by "the strange woman," goeth after her "straight-way, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks."

A case heard at the Marylebone police-court a

little while since lets us see the kind of life which makes the music-hall so patronized and popular. A fashionably-attired young man—a clerk, was summoned for detaining a diamond ring of the value of ten guineas, belonging to a young female of attractive exterior. The statement of the plaintiff was that she had kept company with the defendant, that at Weston's Music-hall he on one occasion asked her for the loan of the ring; that he put it on his finger, and that she had never been able to get it back since. The story—which, however, broke down—of the defendant was that the ring was a gift. He said: “It was given to me on a Sunday evening at the Café Royal. I have known the complainant since November, 1867, and first saw her at the Metropolitan Music-hall with her brother. She was sitting in front, and kept looking round and smiling at me (loud laughter). I tapped her on the shoulder, and asked her what she would take. She said lemonade and sherry, and I paid for some (laughter), and made an appointment to meet her on Sunday. Since then I have taken her to Vance's benefit, Weston's, the Canterbury, the Metropolitan, and several theatres.

We walked out, and spent our Sunday evenings in the Café Royal. She took the ring off her finger one evening whilst we were in the café, and said, ‘Take it, as I do not like jewellery, so many common people wear it.’ We used to go to the Café Royal on a Sunday evening, because she used to like to see the people. I have paid 5s., 6s., and even half-a-guinea a time for her entertainment. I think during twelve months I have spent about 30l.”

Middlesex magistrates ought to know something of such places. It is in the music-hall that the young clerk commences his ill-omened career as a gent on town. There he learns to despise his humble home, to consider as slow a virtuous and manly life—to waste the time and talent God has given him—to get into debt—to mix with the abandoned of either sex—and to commit crime himself. The tale is often told. In Holloway jail I have seen many such. The lad is weak, not really and thoroughly depraved, but he has lived beyond his means—he sees want and ruin staring him in the face—he has some money of his master’s in his hands, or he has access to his master’s cheque-book—or he is sent to the bank to get a large cheque cashed, and the

temptation is strong, stronger than he can withstand. He runs away, vainly thinking that he can escape the hands of justice, and that he will reform and for the future lead a better life; or he embezzles, thinking that he can replace the money before he is found out. From such delusions he is rudely waked by the rough hand of the policeman, to find himself in the felon's cell.

Let me give another music-hall sketch. Here is one, placed as usual in a low neighbourhood. You do not see swells here, as at the Alhambra. They are all very plain-looking people, from the neighbouring shops or warehouses. Just by me are three pale, heavy-looking young men, whose intellects seem dead, except so far as a low cunning indicates a sharpness where money is concerned. One of them is stupidly beery. Their great object is to get him to drink more, notwithstanding his repeated assurances, uttered, however, in a very husky tone, that he must go back to "Islin'ton" to-night. A lady at one end of the room, with a very handsome blue satin dress and a very powerful voice, is screaming out something about "Lovely Spring," but this little party is evidently indifferent

to the charms of the song. Just beyond me is a gent with a short pipe and a very stiff collar. I watch him for an hour, and whether he is enjoying himself intensely, or whether he is enduring an indescribable amount of inward agony, I cannot tell. A little further off is another gent with a very red scarf, equally stoical in appearance. Behind me are two verdant youths, of limited means I imagine; but they have the pleasure of speaking to the comic singer, and take tickets for that interesting gentleman's benefit. The comic singer comes forward, and sings with appropriate action of the doings of a little insect very partial to comfortable quarters. That song I have known for many, many years. It has long been in possession of the stage. Night after night in some drinking-room in some part of London or other is a beery audience told—

“Creeping where no life doth be,
A rare old chap is the lively flea.”

And after a pursuit very vividly pantomimed, the little stranger is suffered to be caught, and to tell the catcher that it is his father's ghost, doomed for a season to walk the earth and nip him most infer-

nally, and so on. Now I am sure that every one in the room has heard this dozens of times before, yet old men are laughing as if it was an absolute novelty. Talk about alcohol brightening men's intellects ! When I come to such places as this, it always seems to me to have a precisely contrary effect. Men could not sit and hear all these stale witticisms unless they drank. Sober, I am sure they could not do it, not even if they were paid for it ; and yet all seem enraptured. I remark, however, one exception. Two waiters help to a seat by my side a very dirty little man with red eyes, and generally shabby appearance. The waiters set down by him a glass of grog, offer him a cigar, and then playfully shaking their fingers at him, as if to intimate he had better be quiet, leave him to his fate. After a few minutes of deep thought, he looks to me and beckons. I take no notice. He repeats the signal. I lean forward.

“ Very o-old, sir.”

“ What do you mean ?” we ask.

“ The comic singer very o-old, sir.”

We intimate as much.

“ But get him on a fresh piece, sir, and see how

he can go-o.” Here our friend began rolling one arm rapidly round the other, to give us an idea of the comic singer’s powers.

“Pity he don’t give something new,” repeats our friend. Another assenting nod on our part and the conversation ceases. But we suppose it is with comic singers as with others. “A man who has settled his opinions does not love to have the tranquillity of his convictions disturbed,” wrote Dr. Johnson, and a comic singer does not like to have the bother of learning fresh songs. But the comic singer was applauded and encored, and then he treated us to a monologue, in which he describes how he, the drunken husband, stays out all night, and makes it up with his “old ooman” when he gets home; and in the course of his remarks he declares that teetotalism is humbug, that there was truth in wine, but he’d be blessed if there was any in water; that the man who would drink the latter would be a muddy cistern—forgetting all the while the *tu quoque* the water-drinkers would very fairly urge; and then I came away, thinking that if drinking made men witty and light-hearted, I had been very unfortunate on the night of my visit.

Once upon a time, as the writer was in the Cave of Harmony, the polite manager asked him his opinion of a new comic singer. Having given it, the red-faced little man turned to us with a sigh, and said, "Ah, sir, you have no idea what a dearth there is of comic talent nowadays." And truly he was right. There is little fun and comedy and wit anywhere. I know not where they are; I know where they are not. You will not find them in the halls where men sit all the evening listening to music for which they do not care, and drinking all the while.

CHAPTER XVII.

PUBLIC-HOUSES.

THE Sporting Public-House was instituted for the combined purpose of encouraging drinking, and what its admirers term the noble art of self-defence. There was a time when boxing was in fashion; when but few of our noblemen and gentlemen did not take lessons in the pugilistic art. "I can assert, without fear of contradiction," writes Pierce Egan, "that I furnished the present Duke of Buccleuch with a pair of boxing-gloves and all the volumes of 'Boxiana' during his studies at Eton College." Prince George of Cambridge learnt the rudiments of the art from young Richmond; the late Duke of Portland was a pupil of that Jackson whose name is familiar to all readers of Byron. At the first public dinner of the Pugilistic Society, held at the Thatched House Tavern, in 1814, a Baronet,

Sir Henry Smith, was in the chair ; and it is a fact that when the war with France was terminated, and the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, accompanied by Blucher and Platoff, visited this country, not anything they had witnessed appeared to interest them more than the sparring matches between Jackson, Tom Cribb, Belcher, Old Dutch Sam, at a *déjeûner* given by Lord Lowther at his mansion. Indeed, so delighted were those great masters of the art of war with the combats between those first-rate boxers, that Messrs. Blucher and Platoff had a second exhibition by their own express desire at the Earl of Elgin's house. Actually even in the House of Commons Mr. Windham favoured the House with a description, warm and glowing, of a recent contest between Richmond and Madox, of which he had been a spectator : and it is not long since Mr. Gully, a prize-fighter, represented Pontefract. The late George IV., when Prince of Wales, was also a spectator at the fight upon a stage on Brighton Downs between Tom Tyne, a distinguished boxer, with a publican of milling notoriety. The latter was killed by a blow on his temple, and died

almost upon the instant. The royal debauchee never attended another, but his brother, the late William the Fourth, was often a spectator of the matches on Moulsey Hurst. In this respect the age has made progress. Our noblemen no longer patronize the prize-ring. Our young princes have a purer taste. Yet the institution, with all its brutality and blackguardism, still exists, a fact easily understood, and the prize-fighter, when his day is over, generally keeps a public-house, which is generally called a sporting-house. A warm admirer of them writes, "Fun, civility, mirth, good-humour, and sporting events are the general theme of conversation to be met with over a cheerful glass at the above houses." Ben Caunt's, in St. Martin's-lane, was perhaps the principal one, but there are some five or six besides in various parts of the metropolis. Let us enter one. In spite of the assurance of civility and good humour, I don't think you will stay long, but will feel on a small scale what Daniel must have felt in the lions' den.

I enter, let us say, Bang Up's hostelry, about ten on a Thursday evening; there is Bang Up at the bar, with his ton of flesh and broken

nose. Many people think it worth while to go and spend one or two shillings at Bang Up's bar, merely that they may have the pleasure of seeing him, and consider him cheap at the money. I don't admire their taste. I once spent an evening with the Norfolk Giant, and I did not find him very witty or well informed. But let us walk upstairs, having first paid sixpence to a doorkeeper, by appearance a negro, for which we are to receive a certain amount of refreshment, if beer and grog come rightly under that denomination; at length we find ourselves in a very ordinary room, with very extraordinary people in it. First, there are the portraits—*imprimis* Bang Up, looking grosser and more animal than ever. Secondly, Mrs. Bang Up, the exact counterpart of her bosom's lord; then a tribe of Bang Ups junior, of all sizes and sexes, attract our astonished eyes. Then—for the room is a complete Walhalla—we have portraits of sporting heroes innumerable, with villanous foreheads, all “vacant of our glorious gains,” heavy eyes, thick bull necks, and very short croppy hair. Here Gully vanquishes Bob Gregson, “the Lancashire champion,” one of the finest and most

formidable men of the day. There Jack Randall and Ned Turner display “a fine science and capital fighting” almost unparalleled, and so on; for the list is long, and it is one we do not care to repeat. We seat ourselves at the further end of the room, with a few gentlemen drinking gin and smoking cigars. Twenty or thirty mean-looking men are seated along the side; they are mostly dirty, and have broken noses; they are not very conversational, but seem chiefly to be deeply engaged in smoking. At length the waiter brings out some boxing-gloves; one man takes off his coat and waistcoat, possibly his shirt, and puts the gloves on; another does the same—they stand up to each other, the gents at the table encourage them, and the seedy men with broken noses look on very knowingly; they spar for some time, till the one feels that he cannot touch the other, and throws down the gloves; a small collection is then made for the noble art of self-defence, which, I presume, is divided amongst the performers; other actors come upon the stage, and the friendly contests are maintained till Bang Up closes his public-house for the night. It is very gratifying, and to the public ought to

be a great consolation to think that there are not many such places in London. The style of men thus created, is, I fear, neither useful nor ornamental. They have a nasty ticket-of-leave look, and I would fain dispense with their company in quiet back streets during the small hours. One other thought may console you ; the sporting public-house, once popular, now attracts but a few, and that few a weak and vicious class. Is not this matter of encouragement ?

The public-house with a billiard-room is a great attraction in some places. I knew a whole town upset by the fact that the landlord of the Swan had fitted up a billiard-room. I and Wiggins and Foley and Jobson spent at one time, I regret to say, a good deal of time there. I am warning the reader against the follies of my youth ; but Foley failed, and Jobson and Wiggins, after having had their debts paid three or four times by their friends, I believe are now following that eminently healthy occupation called gold-digging, somewhere in Australia. Then I think of that little town in South Wales, and of the Angel, under whose too hospitable roof we used to meet. One of us

was an M.P.'s son ; he is now, I believe, dragging down a father's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. Another of us bore a name dear to every Englishman ; he, I believe, is pensioned off by his family, and lives as he can on the handsome allowance of a guinea a week. But these London billiard-rooms are fifty times more pernicious. There are some five or six hundred connected with public-houses. There are in all our large thoroughfares separate rooms licensed for this game, but at these drinking often goes on. And thus the two excitements acting on the man, he is impelled downwards with an increasing power. I have seen in these rooms officers and secretaries of public companies in a night losing, I am sure, a quarter's salary. I have seen young fellows completely ruined. There was not, when I first knew him, a more promising, gentlemanly young fellow than Smethwicke, and now, they tell me, he is in the Marylebone Workhouse.

We are told that men are grown-up children. This saying forcibly occurred to me the last time I was in a public-house billiard-room. After I had recovered from the feeling of suffocation, which

an atmosphere infected by gas and smoke had produced, I observed a number of men with long sticks trying to knock a number of various-coloured balls into any of the six pockets of the billiard-table. At each unsuccessful attempt a chorus of observations was made by the players—a very large majority of whom were gentlemen—men who were perfectly incapable of doing anything but what was strictly honest; the minority were billiard sharks. The gentlemen play because it is a source of excitement: the sharks, because it is a source of profit. There are also some who play only for amusement with gentlemen like themselves, and never risk beyond a shilling or so; and others, mere lookers-on, who, fatigued by their daily labours, prefer a *dolce far niente* to the trouble of theatres, &c., and who read the paper, drink their brandy-and-water, and smoke their cigar, without either playing or making a bet.

It is not easier to distinguish a gentleman in a billiard-room than elsewhere, but without wishing to be personal, it is desirable the stranger should keep at a distance those individuals who are so very familiar and friendly with every one, and who keep a piece

of chalk in their waistcoat pocket. These people cannot be insulted ; they carefully avoid squabbles, which may bring about disagreeable insinuations ; they prefer pursuing the even tenor of their way, “ picking up ” as many people as they can. See yonder old man who totters across the room ; his trade is swindling, his goods are lies, his recreation is obscenity and blasphemy ; his palsied hand can scarcely grasp a cue, and yet there are few who can excel him ; by concealing his game carefully he has won, and can win, hundreds, from his victims, who, thinking nothing of his skill, are astonished, as he pretends to be himself, at his *luck*. The young wife tossing restlessly in her bed, and wondering what can keep her lord so long at *business*, little knows, when he returns home flushed and excited, that he has been fleeced of money he can ill afford to lose ; whilst the sharer of the domestic joys of the billiard shark basks in the sunshine of his momentary good humour, as he displays with a sardonic smile the gold which perhaps never belonged to the dupe who lost it.

The respectable public-house is situated in one of the leading thoroughfares, and is decorated in an

exceedingly handsome manner. The furniture is all new and beautifully polished, the seats are generally exquisitely soft and covered with crimson velvet, the walls are ornamented with pictures and pier-glasses, and the ceiling is adorned in a manner costly and rare. Time was when men were partial to the sanded floor, the plain furniture, the homely style of such places as Dolly's, the London Coffee-house, or the Cock, to which Tennyson has lent the glory of his name. Now the love of show is cultivated to an alarming extent. "Let us be genteel or die," said Mrs. Nickleby, and her spirit surrounds us everywhere. Hence the splendour of the drinking-rooms of the metropolis, and the studied deportment of the waiters, and the subdued awe with which Young Norvals fresh from the Grampian Hills and their fathers' flocks tread the costly carpets or sprawl their long legs beneath glittering mahogany.

Let us suppose it is about nine or ten in the evening, and we step into one of the numerous establishments which are to the respectable classes what the gin-palace and the beer-house are supposed to be to the class who are not. The reader must

pardon my use of the word respectable. It is a word which from my heart I abhor. There are but two ways in which human actions can be contemplated—the worldly and the philosophical. I use the term respectable merely in its worldly acceptation, but I skip this digression and pass on. Undoubtedly at the first blush it is a cheerful scene that first meets our eye. In this box are two or three old friends discussing a bottle of claret, who have not met perhaps since bright and boisterous boyhood, and who may never meet again. Of what manly struggle, of what sorrow that can never die, of what calm pleasures and chastened hopes, have they to tell! No wonder that you see the tear glistening in the eye, though there is laughter on the lip. Pass on; here are some bagmen, red with port and redolent of slang. In the next box are three or four young fellows drinking whisky and smoking cigars, and of course their talk is of wine and women; but there is hope, nevertheless, for woman is still to them a something divine, and the evil days have not come when they see in her nothing but common clay. Look at this retired old gentleman of the old school sitting by himself alone; yet is he

not alone, for as he sips his port memories thicken in his brain of ancient cronies now sleeping in churchyards far away, of a sainted wife no longer a denizen of this dark world of sin, of daughters with laughing children round their knees, all rosy and chubby and flaxen-haired, of sons with Anglo-Saxon energy and faith, planting the old race on a new soil. Cross to this other side and look at these reckless, dissipated fellows, whom the waiter has just respectfully requested not to make so much noise, as it disturbs the other gentlemen in the room. Possibly they are promoters and financial adventurers, and after a few years it will be found that for their revelry to-night a deluded public will have to pay. Here are a host of well-to-do tradesmen discussing politics, and it is wonderful how commonplace is their conversation.

“Gladstone is a great man, by —! he is a great man, sir,” says one. “Yes, and no mistake,” is the reply. “There is no humbug about Gladstone,” says another. And so they ring the changes, originating nothing, gaining nothing, learning nothing, only getting redder in the face and more indistinct in their pronunciation. At length they

button over their great-coats, pay their bills, and generally very good-naturedly, but very unsteadily, steer towards the door. It may be that a noisy discussion takes place. One man a little more gone than the rest, disturbs the harmony of the evening by his flat contradictions, uttered somewhat too rudely, and backed by a blow from the fist on the table, which breaks a couple of glasses. But next morning he apologizes, "It was only my wine contradicting your wine," he says, without any sense of shame. But this rarely happens. The respectable classes have more command of their temper, and do not get so idiotically drunk as the frequenters of low public-houses, and so the *habitués* are in no hurry to move and leave the light and luxurious room for the muddy streets and the winter night. But they must do so, and young men with their passions unnaturally stimulated, and their consciences proportionately deadened, are left to the temptations which await men who are out in the small hours; and old fogies, believing that if they go to bed mellow, they live as they ought to live, and die jolly fellows, find their way to their respective dwelling-places in a state as

lamentable as it is degrading. Yet next Sunday you will see these men at church, and hear them joining in solemn and contrite prayer. Do they think these purple faces tell no tales? Do they think it is only the wife knows how they drink—in respectable company—in respectable hotels? Do they forget that in the midst of their revelry, under the flaming chandeliers, peering over the shoulders of courteous waiters, listening to their vinous laughter and ancient jokes, Death, with his dart, is there? Ay, and one night he will ride home with his victim in the Hansom, and will see him placed, all smelling with drink and under its influence, in the bed, side by side with his wife, and next morning she will as usual give her husband the seidlitz powder or soda water, and leave him to sleep for a short while longer, and when she comes back will find that his is the sleep which knows no waking. And then the inquest will be held—and a medical man will perplex a plain case with useless show of knowledge, and a jury will return a verdict of “Death from natural causes.” You and I know better—you and I know that if the man had not gone into the respectable public-house he might

have lived another ten years—that it was because he went there night after night, and sat soaking there for several hours, that the blood-vessels became gorged and clotted, and that the wonderful machine stood still. “Poisoned by alcohol” is the true verdict—by alcohol sold and consumed in the respectable public-house.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LEICESTER-SQUARE.

ONE of the peculiar institutions of this country is the square. Charles Knight says:—"The Piazza, Place, Platz, of Italy, France, or Germany, have little in common with it. Its elements are simple enough—an open space of a square figure, houses on each of the four sides, and an enclosed centre with turf, a few trees, and, it may be, flowers; and there is a square." There are fashionable squares, all alive with the sound of carriage-wheels and the chaste accents of a thousand flunkys; there are city squares, dull, dark places, with old red-brick houses, and a stunted, smoke-dried shrub or two in the middle. Then there are respectable squares, which never were fashionable, nor ever aimed to be such; and then there are squares which were once fashionable, but now are

sadly gone out of repute. One of the chief of these is Leicester-square. Do my readers remember how Queen Caroline found time to be the mother of seven promising children, of whom the eldest, Frederick, Prince of Wales, was a continual source of sorrow and vexation to both his parents? "He resembled," writes Horace Walpole, with his usual sneer, "the Black Prince only in dying before his father." Well, there was a house built before the Commonwealth called Leicester-house. Hither came this young, dissipated, short-lived prince, and fixed his court. When he passed away, and the wits wrote—

" Here lies Fred,
Who was alive,
And is dead,"

still the place had the prestige of fashion. It gradually assumed the shape of a square, and became the dwelling-place of men truly great. Sir Isaac Newton resided near the square, in a house yet standing, and known to fast men as Bertolini's, *alias* the Newton Hotel. Where now we see the Sablonière Hotel, Hogarth once dwelt; and at a later time Sir Joshua Reynolds lived on the oppo-

site side of the square. In its neighbourhood Sir Charles Bell made his discoveries respecting the nervous system, and here the renowned John Hunter lived. In later times Wordsworth made it the scene of his moon-gazers; and if he could term it "Leicester's busy square," still more is that epithet appropriate to it at the present time. It is true that the Great Globe was not a success; that the Panopticon failed; that the Western Literary Institution did not flourish; that the place is not literary or scientific, nor even business-like, for by daylight the shops look seedy, and the wares exhibited are somewhat of the cheapest. But at night a change comes over the spirit of its dream. In streets all round gay women live. Here, from cheap lodging-houses hard by, from cold garrets or dark and dusty two-pair backs, crawl out to walk its flagstones, or taint its air with the smoke of cheap cigars, men of all nations and tongues—Frenchmen, Germans, Italians, Spaniards, Poles—the scoundrels and patriots of Europe. There is business here now; the air is laden with the sickly odour of a thousand dinners. Hotels and cafés and restaurants are lit up and gay. Wine-shades attract us; we hear the clink of bil-

liards. This house we know to be a betting-house—that to be a hell. A man runs up against me. He turns round and apologizes. I catch a glimpse of his face. I see at once that he is a billiard-room shark. Look at his pale face, his cold eye, his hard mouth; and don't play with him, however civil. Above all, don't imagine from his exterior that he is a gentleman. A gentleman does not wear slop-shop clothes nor mosaic gold.

You wish to sit down. We stroll into the nearest restaurant. The rooms are as smart as gilding and ornamented paper and plate-glass can make them. The waiters are got up regardless of expense. The coffee is good, but dear. The men and women are of the kind usually met with in this locality during the small hours. The greater part are fools enough to think it worth while to buy a little worldly wisdom at a price—it may be at the loss of their bodies and souls—none but madmen would think of paying. In such places as these you are as sure to be injured as if you sat all night carousing in a public-house. These women with forced smiles on their painted cheeks are the veritable Harpies. Theirs is the true sardonic

laugh. Do you remember one way in which that ancient phrase is accounted for? Sardinia, it was said, was noted for a bitter herb which contracted the features of those who tasted it. Pausanias says it is a plant like parsley, which grows near springs, and causes people who eat it to laugh till they die; and these women, have they not eaten a bitter plant, and do they not laugh and die? Beware of the women. Beware of the men. See how their cunning eyes glisten if you change a sovereign. If they can get you into a neighbouring public-house and rob you, they will be rather pleased than otherwise. Look at that tall dark fellow watching us. It was only the other day he met a man here, as he might you or I, and decoyed him into a public-house close by, where his confederates were waiting, and robbed him of forty pounds when they thought their victim was sufficiently "fuddled" with champagne. He and such as he are not particular who they rob. They do not spare the women, I assure you.

Again let us venture out. The debauchery of this part is not what it was. Obscenity is banished and better hours are kept; but there are coffee-

houses about here, dirty, shabby places, patronized by dirty, shabby people. How weary and wayworn are the women! They have been walking the streets for hours—they have been dancing in neighbouring saloons—they have paraded their meretricious charms, and here they sit, hungry, tired, sleepy. No home have they to go to but some wretched room for which they pay a sum equal to the entire rent of the house. There is little gaiety here; the poor comic nigger, with his banjo and his double entendre, playing with all his might in the hope that some gent will stand a cup of coffee and a muffin, can scarce raise a laugh. Timidly one asks, “Will you treat me to a cup of coffee, sir?” Yes, forlorn one. If your sin is great, so is your punishment; once you might have been a dainty little wife, and now what are you? I say it sorrowfully, the scum of the streets, garbage for drunken lust.

Let us go a little further on, and enter the London Pavilion; a place where you can smoke and drink and see gay women, besides listen to the various entertainments of the place. It has always struck me that of all asses the English

ass is the greatest. How conspicuous, for instance, are those three young fellows sitting at the small marble table in front of us. Most likely they are medical students. Of course they are drinking and smoking, and have female companions, respecting whose characters there can be no doubt. How happy are they in their conceit—in their insolent laugh at the foreigners round them—in their vulgar shouts of derisive applause! Talk to them, and you will be astonished to find how morally dead they are; how narrow is their range of thought; how obsolete are all their ideas; how suppressed are all their sympathies;—not even the beer they drink can be heavier. Yet these lads are to teach the next age its medical science—and in the last death-struggle, when we would save the life we love, with broken hearts and streaming eyes, we shall appeal to them in vain. In England the general practitioner will always be under-bred so long as the music-hall and the casino absorb the hours science imperiously claims. But pass on to this next table. Look at this girl all radiant with beauty and smiles—beautiful even in spite of her long-lost virtue and life of sin. For—

“ You may break, you may ruin, the vase if you will,
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.”

The man seated by her side is in love with her. It may be for her love he has given up mother, sister, betrothed, home, his fair name, his prospects in life, his hopes of heaven ; and she no more heeds his passionate vows than does the rock the murmur of the waves at its feet ; and already her wanton eye glances round the room for other victims to sacrifice to her vanity and pride. Oh, the deceit and craft and hardness of women such as her ! And yet on account of such in distant village-homes there is sadness, and the mother and sister deny themselves many a luxury, and grey-haired fathers mourn over their lost and loved—their Benjamins—born and nurtured to come to such an end. Perhaps at the next table the picture is reversed ; that woman is beautiful, and her face has a smile, and there is a flush upon her cheek, and the wine has driven from her heart for a while bitter memories ; but she is not happy, though loud be her laugh ; and if she dared to sit and think of the hour when she fell, and of the mire and dirt along which she has crawled, of what she is now

in her rustling silks, and what she was in her peasant dress then—eyes full of grief, and dim with tears, would look into her own ; and out of that gilded room, and away from all the song and laughter and wine, would she not rush home to die ? Yet if she now sells herself to pay to-morrow's baker's bill, is she to be trod on by the high-born beauty that goes up to God's altar with one for whom she has no love, for an establishment that will make her bridesmaids yellow with well-bred jealousy ? But we are all gay here. Is not the room light and cheerful ? Is not the whole aspect all mirth-inspiring ? Does not dull care flee the flowing bowl ? Jolly fellows are sitting and telling each other tales which you would be sorry your sister should hear, and which no mother would believe would be ever heard by son of hers without a manly protest. Women are laughing and drinking as if theirs were not lives of shame. Sated men about town languidly smoke, and the eye of the gloomy refugee sparkles, and his heart beats quicker, as he hears the song of his Fatherland. The hours hasten on—the company depart—the wanton beauty, flushed with conquest,

rides off in the Hansom, or it may be in her private brougham, to her luxurious rooms; while her sister, shivering in the cold night, begs us for sixpence with which to purchase a bed of straw. Poor forlorn one! in another year thou wilt lie down in another bed, only to wake up when the last trump shall sound!

Here let me say a word on our domestic life. When there is so little difference between the majority of men and women, why should the line of demarcation be so severely drawn? We talk very prettily about home, sweet home, and poets sing its love and purity and charms; and a popular picture is that which the artist draws when he groups together the grey-haired grandfather and grandmother, seated by the fire, and father and mother by their side, and brave lads and graceful girls around listening, by the warm light of the lamp, to some tale of manly struggle or Christian chivalry, or lifting up together the glad voice of song. But why should your son or mine immediately he goes out into the world and leaves the parental roof become a stranger to all this? If the Englishman's home be his castle, why should

we cast out into the ditch, to lie down and die in its mire, all who are not of the family? Think of the thousands and thousands of young men who yearly come up to town, strangers to every one, and with no chance of getting into female society, except such as they find at such places. These women are not lovelier than you meet with in respectable houses—not better educated nor more correct in their principles; yet as by natural instinct one sex seeks the society of the other, we condemn our youth to the company of such. Paterfamilias is afraid the young men will pay attention to his daughters. Perhaps the young-lady daughters fancy it to be beneath them to be civil to their father's young men. Perhaps the young men themselves believe that an honourable connexion is beyond their means, and deliberately pursue a career of vice. In all these cases very serious blunders are involved. The life of a bachelor under the circumstances I here allude to is quite as costly as that of a married man, without the stimulus to exertion which the latter has. Paterfamilias forgets that the young man he fears may be the suitor for his daughter's

hand, though he is poor to-day, may be comparatively rich to-morrow ; and the young ladies should remember that it is rather too much to expect that a young man just entering upon life should be able to launch out in the same style as those who for thirty or forty years have been pursuing a successful professional or commercial career.

CHAPTER XIX.

A MIDNIGHT MEETING.

MY readers may be aware that of late years what are called Midnight Meetings have been held. I have lately attended one. All the world knows that some earnest men have set themselves to work to reclaim women who have fallen into sin and shame. Men are bad from many ways—from want, from will, from ignorance, from recklessness—some from the mere love of change, and others from temptation coming at once and almost impossible to resist. Women similarly are bad. Some of these causes we can remove, and in so doing save the woman who has sinned against her own soul and the welfare of society at large. To tell the poor thing who prostitutes herself for a bit of bread, that you can give her that, and a home besides, is a sure way of reclaiming her. The devil holds out his baits, why should not you hold yours?

Some poor women never had a chance of doing right. They were born in shame, and have led lives of shame. Why not give them a chance of becoming decent and respectable?

I write not here of midnight in the Haymarket. From casinos, and supper-rooms, and music-halls, and theatres, and coffee-houses, and streets of doubtful reputation—from far and near have assembled a crowd, of which as I have already described it, nothing further need be said. Gin-shops, and divans, and oyster-rooms pour forth a flood of light on the ever-shifting scene. In this laughing, drinking, chaffing, quarrelling crowd you see now and then an elderly gentleman of almost clerical appearance distributing what appear to be letters done up in envelopes. You observe he only presents them to the female portion of this Vanity Fair mob. Strange is the effect of this apparently harmless epistle. Some girls tear it up, some laugh, some accept it thankfully, some refuse it with scorn. See, a gentleman has persuaded a couple of girls to accompany him. I follow him, and find myself in the interior of one of the most fashionable of London restaurants. There are not many people

here yet. On the numerous tables around are tea-cups and plates, and cake and bread and butter. Waiters are present with huge pots of coffee. A few girls are seated at different tables, and, while they are partaking of refreshment, are chatting with a few ladies and gentlemen connected with the movement. You can guess what they are talking about, and this I take to be the hardest part of the night's work. It requires an uncommon amount of delicacy and tact. Let us hope those present have the requisite delicacy and tact. It is not enough to mean well. If good meaning could save the world, society would have been regenerated long ere this. One or two clergymen are present, but they sit quiet and apart. One of them will presently deliver an address. He, it may be, is now thinking it over. I cannot believe, however, it would be less appropriate if he would just walk about the room and enter into conversation with some of the guests. Let me name him with honour. He was a chaplain to the Queen, and of aristocratic descent. His father was an English peer, and he himself was one of the leaders of the evangelical clergy in the Church of England. Yet he gave up his

status and became a hardworking Baptist minister in a chapel not far from the Foundling Hospital simply because conscience dictated such a step. Well may he ask the young women around him to fly the allurements of the world—if such there be to them—(not many of them seem to have been very successful in their calling)—and return to duty and to God. Let us suppose an hour has past away ; the room has become very full ; a great deal of eating and drinking and talking is going on. A change, too, has come over the assembly. The girls look more at home and more interested, very different to the appearance they presented in the Haymarket an hour ago. Some are evidently very weary, and wish themselves away, but the majority receive the invitation in the spirit in which it was given. A few look saucy and flippant, and one or two are evidently the worse for drink. We have here all ages and conditions—some evidently very much battered and beaten and worn, and some who have just commenced what in bitter irony may be termed their gay career. Oh ! some of them still think of home, still remember a father's care, and still feel on them the soft pressure of a mother's love. Look

on that young one weeping ; surely she cannot long have trodden the Haymarket stones ; surely she cannot long have bid good-bye to home. Surely, on this winter night, a mother yet may be listening at the cottage door, and saying to herself, “ My Rose, the child of my old age, will she not come back to me now ? ” Mother, rejoice ; the good Samaritan has picked up your poor girl, and is already on his way with her. They do say the devil, when he plays with man or woman for his soul, is sure to cheat them. Poor deluded ones around me, in faded finery, and with cheeks red with rouge, has he not cheated you ? You were allured by money and gay attire—you have not either. Love tempted you, and you fell, and have lost that. Indolence tempted you, and you fell ; an Egyptian bondage is preferable to yours. Or ambition tempted you, and you fell—fell so that the merest peasant maid is a lady, and leads a royal life, compared with you. I am aware much is to be said on your behalf,—that many who scorn you would be no better had they to live as you did. When one sees how female labour is remunerated, one wonders not that so many girls go astray, but that so many are honest. Look at the

great employers of labour in London—ask them what they pay their female hands. Go to the best-known of such—the men who are the ornaments of religious societies, whose names figure in lists of donations and subscriptions to charitable objects for large sums, who keep holy the Sabbath, and outwardly avoid the appearance of evil, and you will find that they give to the women in their employ, wages on which they cannot decently live. They are right, I know, according to the modern gospel—they do as all do nowadays, buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market. But have they or any masters a right to take the whole time of any man or woman for a remuneration that will scarcely secure bread? Depend upon it, “the social evil,” as it is called, is, as regards most women, a mere question of wages, and will cease when female labour is better paid. But time passes on. A gentleman gives out a hymn; they all rise and sing,

“Sinner, why so thoughtless grown,
Why in such dreadful haste to die,
Daring to leap to worlds unknown,
Heedless against thy God to fly?”

A few more verses are sung; a woman near me

says she wishes for flash songs ; but she has been drinking before she came in, and is evidently here for what she terms a lark. The singing over, the clergyman I have already alluded to—the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel—delivers a short address. It is very solemn, almost too much so. There is no beating about the bush. We are all lost and perishing, he tells us, but some have been saved by grace. Those who are lost, if they die, must be damned ; and the question then is, whether those present were prepared for that alternative. I look round, and some women are asleep, and many are inattentive. In a few minutes Mr. Noel ceases to be theological, and touches on things of human interest. He speaks less of abstractions, and more of living flesh and blood. He deals in personal narrative. He tells anecdotes of such as they whose hearts had been suddenly touched and whose lives suddenly amended by listening to the gospel offer of salvation. None sleep, and very few are inattentive now. When he last addressed them, said the reverend gentleman, there was a woman in that room who had accepted the rescue offered her and become a Christian woman, and he loved her as such. Mr. Radcliffe had been lecturing to such a

they at Edinburgh, and wonderful conversions had been made. Mr. Weaver, while preaching at the Surrey Theatre, had been in a similar manner successful. They had told Mr. Noel anecdotes, which he repeated. Such was the address, lasting about half an hour, delivered in a simple and earnest and affectionate manner. At the conclusion prayer was offered up, another hymn was sung, and an intimation was then given that those who liked to go were at liberty to do so, and that if any liked to remain they would receive a kindly welcome, and be provided with a home. A home! what magic there is in the term! It had charms to some there. Back to the world of riot without—to laugh, and drink, and die—most go; but some stop to be garnered up, and cared for, and saved, sinners though they be. Sinners, I say, but not sinners at whom we may cast stones, not sinners to be held up to reproach whilst we reverence and do honour to far bigger sinners every day. The sweetest page in all the Gospel story is that which tells of Mary Magdalene, which tells how

“She sat and wept, and with her untress’d hair
Still wiped the feet she was so blest to touch;

And He wiped off the soiling of despair
From her sweet soul because she loved so much."

And the Marys in that room had heard of her, and were evidently trusting to do the same.

From these meetings the women are drafted off to homes; the Society for the Rescue of Young Women and Children has twelve such. "These homes are on the family principle, from fifteen to twenty only being associated together. These 'Family Homes' are placed under the care of pious married women or widows. There is nothing to distinguish any of the houses belonging to the Society from private residences. There is not a strict uniformity of dress, nor are the inmates confined by bolts or bars. The hair is not cut off. The diet is on a liberal scale. Those who have strayed from the path of virtue are not associated with other girls. A proper classification of the young women is one of the Society's most important principles; and one great object of having the homes situated in widely different parts of London is that girls associated with bad companions may be removed to an opposite part of London from that in which they lived. The in-

mates are allowed to see their friends on the first Monday in every two months, and to write once a month, or oftener if necessary. They are instructed in every useful household work, together with knitting, sewing, laundry work, &c. At several of the homes the girls bake their own bread. The younger part of the family are chiefly occupied in learning to read, write, and do simple arithmetic. The inmates attend public worship on the Lord's day. Family worship is strictly observed, morning and evening, and the inmates are constantly urged to seek a change of heart as essential to their salvation. Corporal punishment is never inflicted; the arrangements are such that the greatest punishment is separation from their companions and the incurring of the matron's displeasure; thus love, as distinguished from compulsion and coercion, is the basis of the Society's plans. Spirits, wine, and beer are not allowed to any of the inmates, except by medical authority."

On one occasion it was found, that of 422 who had fallen into vice 320 had been domestic servants; 47 had been living at home, being too young for

service ; 7 had been needlewomen ; 5 had been dressmakers or milliners ; 2 had been shopwomen ; 1 had been a teacher ; 5 had been factory girls ; 1 had been a book-keeper ; 1 had been a nursery governess ; 1 had been a barmaid ; 1 had been a bookbinder ; 2 had been laundresses ; 3 had been at field-work ; 26 had no occupation. Of this number, 217 had either lost both parents, or were fatherless or motherless. Out of 409 cases we find that 307 were not over twenty years of age when they were led astray. And it is a very painful fact—and one which we find it very difficult to realize—that five out of every six have been Sunday scholars. Of course drink plays a part in this female ruin. For instance, we read : “ E—— S——, aged 17, of London, nurtured by a profligate father and a *drunken mother*.” The writer of the report very naturally asks—Who can wonder, then, that at the age of fifteen this young creature fell ? The part that drink plays in this dance of death we imagine is more of a conservative character. Drink keeps fallen women where they are. It may not have been the direct means of their fall, but it certainly forbids them ever to rise. But the most frightful fact, and one

which, however, we have long suspected, is, in many families, the character of domestic servitude. Mistresses often complain that they cannot get good servants. It is clear servants do not often get good mistresses, or it would be utterly impossible that out of four hundred and twenty-two fallen females, three hundred and twenty had been domestic servants. This is a social evil on an extended scale. In such homes as these the mistresses must have failed in their duty. We hope and believe such homes are the exception, but still they are far too common. There must have been more or less of neglect. The mistress of a servant is bound to see that her servants are made comfortable—that they are protected. If they fall when in her service, we fear too often part of the disgrace and shame must attach to herself. A word from her kindly spoken might often save a giddy girl when on the verge of ruin. What we require is that men and women would wake up to a sense of life's duties and responsibilities. If mistresses were humane, thoughtful, Christian, there would be fewer servants on the streets. Of course we are now looking at the social evil merely from a

limited point of view, we are merely taking the experience of one society—a society that evidently comes into contact with it in its lowest forms. Yet even here we learn something of its extent, as we find one of the rescued girls was the daughter of a woman the mistress of a clergyman. But it is clear that the social evils who infest the public promenades, who wear the most expensive dresses, live in the most splendidly furnished houses, ride in the daintiest of broughams, whose society is courted by men of wealth and rank, are not to be reached by such organization as that whose report we have just referred to. The time may come when society may cast them out, and they too may be glad of space for repentance.

THE END.

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